

SLINGSHOT

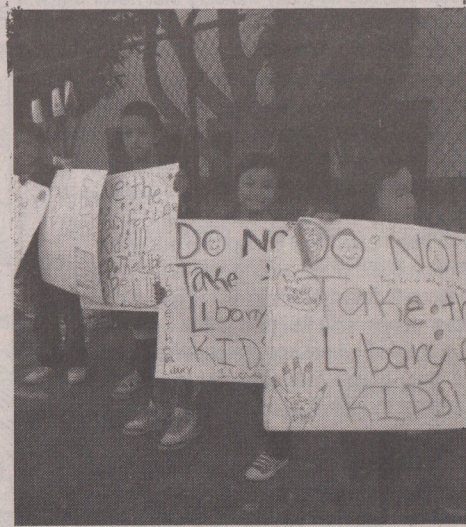


"Your Soul is Your Library Card"

Liberated Library Enlivens Community

By Jaime Omar Yassin

In the first recent action of its kind, anti-austerity Occupy activists and radical librarians converged on a newly opened derelict building in Oakland, California's Fruitvale district on Monday, August 13, and began to stock it with books. The building at 15th and Miller Avenue had been a library for over six decades, then an alternative continuation school founded by radical Chicano activists, and an adjunct to a halfway house across the street; but it had been abandoned for over a decade since. The library was part of a national set of Carnegie grant donations, still known for their architectural beauty; the building remains in the National Registry of Historic Places. But long years of absolute neglect have meant a decaying facade. A crumbling barbed wire fence kept families and children from using the



FROM SIDEWALK TO SLAMMER

A New York Teacher Gets A Cheap Education

By Rory G. Gargove

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FROM SIDEWALK TO SLAMMER:

A New York Teacher Gets A Cheap Education

By Rory G. Gargove

Early this summer, I was arrested for participating in a political march and became one of the 7,000 people nationwide jailed as part of the Occupy movement. I was surprised to find myself part of this group, not having intended to commit civil disobedience or otherwise risk arrest.

The march was a Casserole, a style of protest seen recently in Chile and Canada, in which people make a loud clatter by banging on pots, pans, and other kitchen utensils. Casseroles had been occurring for about a month in New York City in solidarity with a student strike in Montreal, which had shut down universities there for three months. The New York marches also highlighted issues of educational access: student debt, tuition hikes, and cuts to public funding of universities. As a teacher, these issues are important to me, but I was drawn to the Casseroles as much for their style: their gesture of converting the tools of domestic labor into the cacophonous instruments of protest. As someone who served food at Zuccotti and cooked a lot for

Occupy, it felt appropriate to get out of the kitchen and into the street. This was my third march, and, luckily, the first time I went with someone I knew, an old friend named Benin.

We showed up at Washington Square a little after 8:00pm. There were between 200-300 people milling around, listening to speeches, and getting ready to set out. In addition to the usual culinary noisemakers, a couple drums and a cowbell lent the evening a festive feel, though the police presence was noticeably larger than at recent marches. A little after 8:30, Benin and I moved with the crowd to exit the park at the northwest corner. A few protesters entered the street and walked against traffic, which was stopped at the light. Benin and I crossed Sixth Avenue and turned south at the gutter. But a few steps from the sidewalk, my legs were swept from under me. I

was on the ground, my glasses knocked off, two buttons torn from my shirt, my knee hurting. I didn't see who had done this, but I heard, "He's on the ground," and "We've got one. We only need one." Someone bent over

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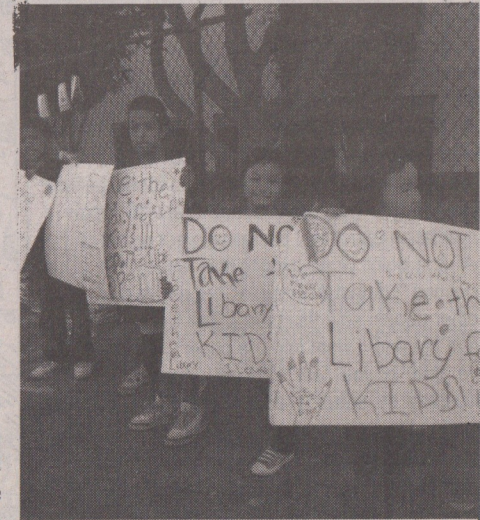
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That all changed on Monday morning.



Having gained access to the building and grounds, with the main gate mysteriously moved aside and the door wide open, activists and community members spent hours cleaning the built-up and stagnant refuse of the forgotten interior's accumulated detritus. Others brought milk-crates full of books and stocked

Continued on page 11

BLACK BLOC BREAKS WINDOWS, FAILS TO MAKE IMPACT

By MaxCrosby

Gentrification is a process where a working class, low-income neighborhood is colonized by the affluent, and transformed into a bourgeois area. The 'embourgeoisification' of a formerly proletarian quarter often begins when authentically impoverished low-income artists and bohemians move in. Minimum-toil-culture types are drawn to a low-income area by cheap rents, and are also often animated by an authentic antipathy for the larger homogenous corporatized society around us. Their marginal presence is followed by a proliferation of artsy enterprises: high-end

middle class tastes. The gentry come to shop and party, and end up moving in, driving up the cost of rental housing, annexing affordable housing altogether, helping to drive hardcore wage slaves and the poor out of their homes and remaking an area in the image of the gentry's grasping, conspicuously consuming, conformist selves.

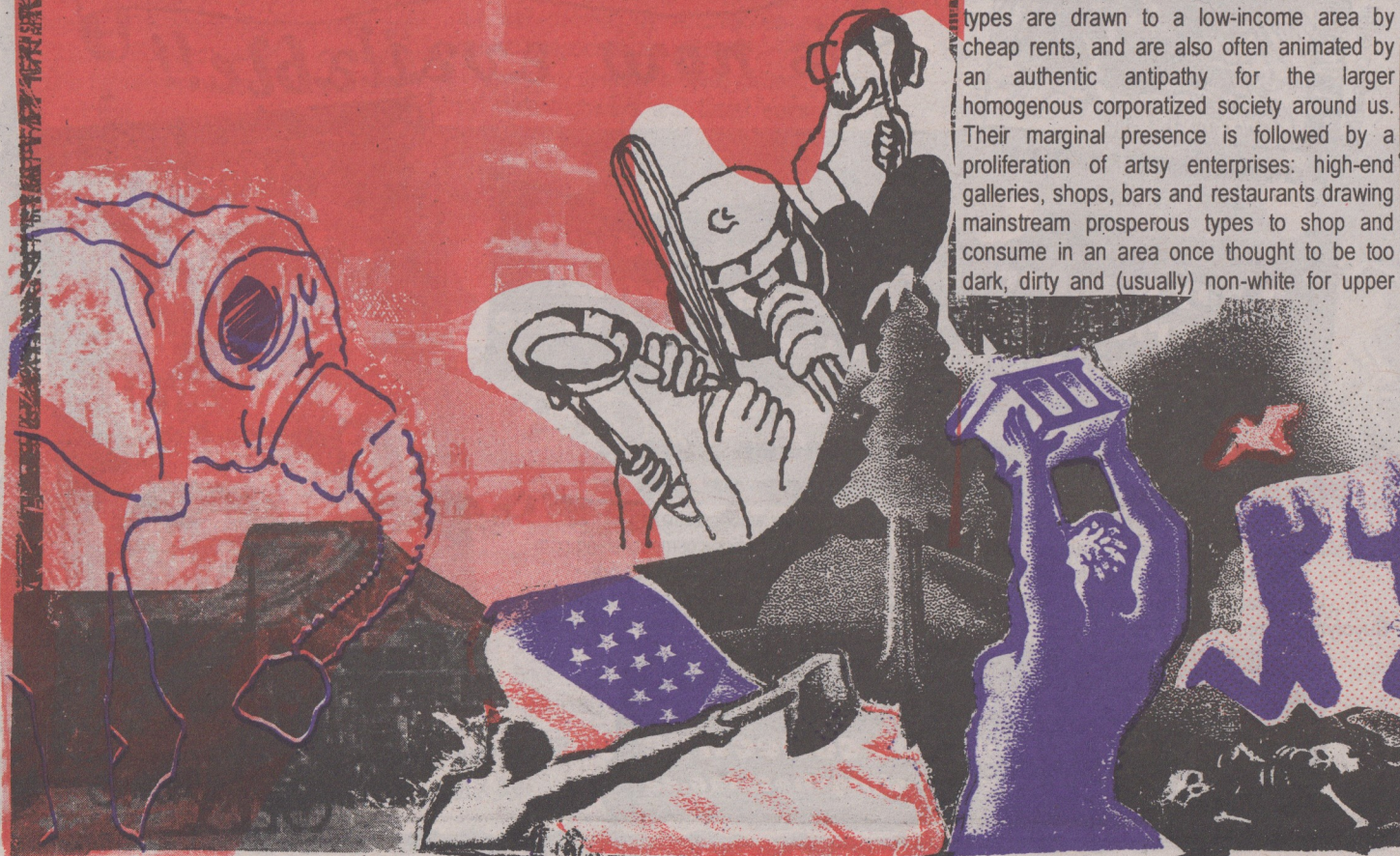
Gentrification is all about private property and the primacy of property rights over human needs in a market society. Vandalism of the property of wealthy invaders is an organic automatic response to the threat of

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The march was a Casserole, a style of protest seen recently in Chile and Canada, in which people make a loud clatter by banging on pots, pans, and other kitchen utensils. Casseroles had been occurring for about a month in New York City in solidarity with a student strike in Montreal, which had shut down universities there for three months. The New York marches also highlighted issues of educational access: student debt, tuition hikes, and cuts to public funding of universities. As a teacher, these issues are important to me, but I was drawn to the Casseroles as much for their style: their gesture of converting the tools of domestic labor into the cacophonous instruments of protest. As someone who served food at Zuccotti and cooked a lot for

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middle class tastes. The gentry come to shop and party, and end up moving in, driving up the cost of rental housing, annexing affordable housing altogether, helping to drive hardcore wage slaves and the poor out of their homes and remaking an area in the image of the gentry's grasping, conspicuously consuming, conformist selves.

Gentrification is all about private property and the primacy of property rights over human needs in a market society. Vandalism of the property of wealthy invaders is an organic automatic response to the threat of dispossession gentrification brings. But sometimes a brick through a window is only a brick in a window. In fact, in most cases a broken window is just a broken window, a mere expression of atomized powerless rage. Context is everything.

A one-night-only mass vandalism spree that occurred several months ago in San Francisco's rapidly gentrifying Mission District shows how a successful episode of mass property destruction can in fact be a complete failure in terms of authentic subversive social struggle.

On the night of Monday, April 30th, a rally associated with the Occupy movement was held in the Mission District's Dolores Park. As the rally ended, a march departed from the park and headed down 18th street, which is now a hyper-gentrified corridor of expensive restaurants and stores. Marchers vandalized a

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SLINGSHOT

Slingshot is an independent radical newspaper published in Berkeley since 1988.

Slingshot isn't like other papers. In the mainstream press, you'll find glossy articles about things that already make perfect sense. They feature fake controversies that mislead us into believing that we don't have the power to enact change ourselves, but that we must go through the "proper" channels, like voting, writing letters to the editor, etc, instead of taking to the street. We are not the rulers of the world — we are not in charge — our narrative is broken by the limits of our power. We are engaged in projects that are not yet complete — projects that are being actively blocked by those who have accumulated wealth and use their power to control everyone's lives while running the planet towards destruction.

We aim to be edgewalkers; working on projects at the edges of capitalism — radical squats, experimental farms, urban guerilla collectives — while striving to extract our psyches from the sway of consumerism. Every few months, we take a break from these projects and come together to create *Slingshot*. These are the ideas that come to us as we lay awake at night, dreaming of new spaces, reflecting on what we have accomplished.

Our articles can be rough at the edges, the arguments incomplete, but grappling for insight. The arrows of inquiry are shot out into the void, but don't always reach a target — they burn up in the atmosphere, like so many meteors that never reach the earth.

A number of articles in this issue struggle with identity and privilege in different ways. With each voice, different assumptions are made. Often words of an author become mired in complex tangles that cannot be so readily teased apart. Not every person in the collective nor in our readership identifies with these pieces, but we present them to open a conversation about real positions in our world.

At one point while making this issue, one of us exclaimed "I detest this article!" but as we discussed it, other people saw things in it that were important, and in the end it went into the paper unblocked. We hope that, if you feel strongly, you will join the discussion by sending us an article for the next issue.

The centerfold poster was inspired by poetry Sean Swain sent us from his prison cell:

A Handful of Leaves

SIT ON IT!

Problematic

politics:

cleansing the poor
with sit/lie laws

By Berkeley Copwatch

In November, a measure to ban sitting and lying on commercial sidewalks will be on the ballot in Berkeley. This is being posed under the guise of protecting local businesses, and protecting the rights of shoppers to not be intimidated by houseless people. The first time you get cited, it's an infraction with a \$75 fine or community service. Subsequent citations can be charged as a misdemeanor. The proposed ordinance says it should be applied in a way that doesn't discriminate. Who the hell do they think they are kidding? The whole thing is discriminatory. The measure says that banning sitting and lying is "the only practicable solution," to Telegraph Avenue's problems. Horseshit.

The law would allow the police to push the envelope even further than they already do.

his taste. Marc Weinstein — owner of Amoeba Records — has been demanding the city pay more attention to the Telegraph area. By this he means doing things that are good for his business, including more police. Craig Becker — owner of Cafe Mediterranean — was the go-between between the Chief of Police and the business community in announcing a new police bike/foot patrol, which started April 30. All this is documented in emails Berkeley Copwatch received from the city via a Public Records Act request.

Curiously, all three of these establishments like to bask in the glow of Berkeley as a place of alternative culture and politics, as long as they get to run the show and make money selling things that people don't really need. This makes them vulnerable to a well-coordinated, sustained boycott campaign, but

houseless people are on a rampage of murder, rape, robbery, and other crimes of violence? They aren't, and there are laws against those things too. Are they intimidating business patrons? If they are, it is only because business patrons don't like seeing poor, underprivileged kids hanging out in the street while they spend money. Businesses claim the kids are bad for business, but is this true? Houseless youth spend money in the areas they hang out in — they are helping keep businesses like the Caffe Mediteranneum afloat. Curious.

So, what is "problematic behavior?" It is a repugnant excuse to keep certain people out of public view. This is really about keeping society clean. This is the sinister aspect of this. The street youth aren't criminal, they aren't harming businesses, but they don't look good. Perhaps they remind us of reality. Perhaps privileged people with money don't want to recognize the fucked-up nature of society. There are those who want to cleanse the city. There are those who want to move certain people as far away as possible. What's going to happen when kids can't hang out on the sidewalk? As veteran homeless attorney/advocate Osha Neumann has pointed out, where will they go? The parks? That will go over great. Then we'll just push them out of the parks in a program of park cleaning. Aha! Homeless encampments in the park! We must now cleanse the parks! And so on, and so on, until they don't exist. But poor people will still exist somewhere. It may be primarily behind bars, but the cleansing project can move



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A Handful of Leaves

*A prayer for the children of the next Neolithic,
That we leave to them*

*A field of lilies where a WalMart once stood,
Salmon upstream from the ruins of a dam,
Kudzu vines embracing skeletons of skyscrapers,
Cracked & overgrown ribbons of nameless
super-highways*

*That you may lay entwined in fields of lilies,
Sustain yourselves on sister salmon,
Climb the vines of kudzu to shelter,
Salt meat on the remains of the highway,
and use this poem for kindling at sundown
So you can spare a handful of leaves
Where the gods write poetry of their own.*

As the paper went to press, we unpacked a huge truck of 2013 Organizer calendars, which is how we fund this paper. Last spring, we decided to make a version of the Organizer for smart phones since so many people use them instead of paper calendars nowadays. We have a good idea of how we want it to look but we're still looking for someone to write the code, so if you know how, contact us. We need someone with follow through and the time and skills for a paid gig. Target completion date; Jan. 1, 2013.

Slingshot is always looking for new writers, artists, editors, photographers, translators, distributors, etc. to make this paper. If you send something written, please be open to editing.

Editorial decisions are made by the Slingshot Collective but not all the articles reflect the opinions of all collective members. We welcome debate and

do they think they are kidding? The whole thing is discriminatory. The measure says that banning sitting and lying is "the only practicable solution," to Telegraph Avenue's problems. Horseshit.

The law would allow the police to push the envelope even further than they already do.



Berkeley Copwatch has seen increased harassment and violence against houseless people by the police over the last few months, as the police anticipate this measure becoming law.

Some business owners are adamant that this is necessary to protect the city and the economy. Telegraph Avenue is the site of some particularly aggressive business owners. Al Geyer — owner of Annapurna headshop — said that the City of Berkeley looked "like a joke," when they didn't have enough police for

afloat. Curious. Surprisingly, all three of these establishments like to bask in the glow of Berkeley as a place of alternative culture and politics, as long as they get to run the show and make money selling things that people don't really need. This makes them vulnerable to a well-coordinated, sustained boycott campaign, but

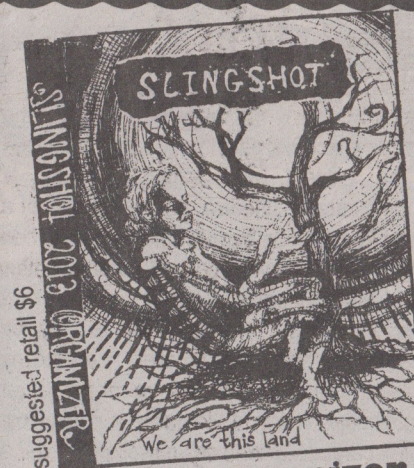
Berkeley Copwatch is not calling for a boycott.

There has been much made of "uncivil" and "problematic behavior" on sidewalks. The measure does not talk about crime. In fact, the word "crime" appears only once, and specifically *does not* refer to street youth. So, what do those words mean? Does it mean houseless people are obstructing sidewalks? Actually, they aren't, and there is already a law against obstructing sidewalks, which is regularly enforced against people who aren't obstructing the sidewalk. Does it mean

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Berkeley Copwatch is an all-volunteer, non-partisan police accountability organization. Interestingly enough, the impetus for our existence came in 1990 on Telegraph Avenue during a police crackdown on the houseless community. If you are interested in getting involved, contact us at (510) 548-0425, or berkeleycopwatch@yahoo.com. Check us out at www.berkeleycopwatch.org.



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A field of lilies where a Wal-Mart once stood,
Salmon upstream from the ruins of a dam,
Kudzu vines embracing skeletons of skyscrapers,
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Thanks to the people who made this: Angie, Ant Claire, Coleen, Dana, Darin, Enola, eggplant, Gnatie, Jasmine, Jesse, Joey, Jonathon, Julia, Kermit, Lew, Kilroy, Samara, Sandy, Solomon, and all the authors and artists.

Slingshot New Volunteer Meeting

Volunteers interested in getting involved with Slingshot can come to the new volunteer meeting on Sunday December 16, 2012 at 4 p.m. at the Long Haul in Berkeley (see below.)

Article Deadline & Next Issue Date

Submit your articles for issue 112 by January 19, 2013 at 3 p.m.

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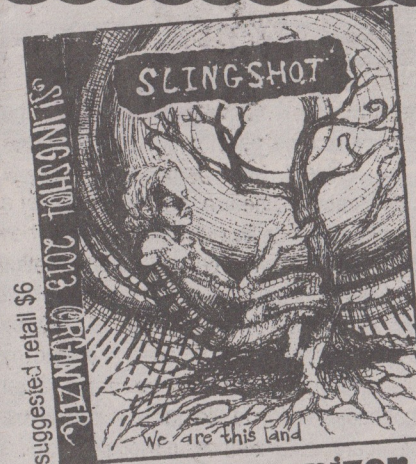
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Disneyland



is



safe



system scrambles to contain Anaheim uprising

By Anonymous

July 21, 2012. Police observe three men in a car. These men appear "suspicious" to police. When the police approach the men, they flee. The police chase after one man in particular, Manuel Angel Diaz. The chase ends when the police shoot the man in the back of the head. The man dies. He is 25 years old.

What is notable is not the fact of the police execution, unfortunately: police murder is an all-too-common event in communities of color. But the quickness of local residents' reaction against the police — the manifestation of area residents' aversion to the police, their utter distrust and hostility — is exemplary. Within hours, local residents gather, some throw rocks and bottles at police. Police shoot the crowd with bean bags and pepper balls, and release a canine on a mother and her child. The police reaction to the crowd is not surprising. The only hope is that area residents respond in kind. And they do. Helicopters shine spotlights on the crowds that remain in the streets. Small groups of people light dumpsters on fire.

July 22, 2012. A "gang officer" spots a "recognized gang member" in a stolen vehicle. The officers pursue the individual. Shots are exchanged, allegedly. The police kill 21-year-old Joel Acevedo. A handgun is found near the dead man, according to police.

The man who runs is shot in the back. The man who shoots back is also killed. The only certainty is death at the hands of the police.

The counter-insurgency mobilizes. By way of media accounts, the police murders become "incident[s]." Local government bureaucrats and "community leaders" call for "investigations." Investigations by the police, the district attorney, the FBI. The "truth" must be discerned. Media figures attempt to

Meanwhile, the police prepare for war. The Anaheim Police Association publicly justifies the police murders. In response to the murmurs of uprising, the police increase their street patrols: "We have more officers on the street to preserve the peace," Anaheim police Chief John Welter said" according to the *Orange County Register*.

July 24, 2012. Hundreds converge at City Hall. City leaders abort the meeting when protests outside turn "violent." Hundreds of protesters take the streets. They light dumpsters on fire and smash the windows of businesses. They throw bricks and even Molotovs at police. Police attack the unruly crowd with batons, rubber bullets, and pepper balls. The crowd refuses to disperse.

July 25, 2012. Manuel Diaz's mother calls for a "peaceful justice" "within the law" to

community harboring the unruly crowd, they are valuable to the City in that they are entities the City can negotiate with and that communicate the (alleged) desires of the unruly crowd in a language the City understands. "Tourism officials" assure "tourists" that the uprisings are isolated occurrences — Disneyland is safe.

July 29, 2012. What is striking is not necessarily the police's preparedness for war, but rather their obvious neglect to obscure their role as a counter-insurgency force. Thus, instead of donning the traditional riot uniform and the baton, the police wear military fatigues and are armed with rifles and less-than-lethal weapons that closely resemble grenade launchers. The image conjured is not South Central Los Angeles, 1992, but Afghanistan, 2012. Not urban riot, but urban insurgency.



avenge her son's death. But, with all due respect, this is an impossibility: the police murder within the law, and therefore by definition police cannot commit murder; they are immune, because in a very real sense, they are the law. "Guilt" and "innocence" are but two faces of the same coin. What's at issue

And next to the commando, there is the atavistic mounted police, reference to a past form of brute repression. In the shadow of the Happiest Place on Earth, we see that the police are not merely tasked with disciplining populations, but also with annihilating those who refuse to subordinate themselves to the

demonstrations outside police headquarters live outside city limits." "[M]any of those obscuring their faces with bandanas and carrying gas masks were not from Anaheim." Those who come prepared to fight the police, and those who cannot be driven out by the violence of the police are discursively expelled from 'the community.' They are "from elsewhere."

Ever adept, power understood the ineffectiveness of its calls for 'dialogue' after the "unruly" communicated their hatred of that-which-is in a cacophony of broken glass and burning dumpsters. Adjusting to Sunday's events, power sanctified the 'silent' protesters who police themselves.

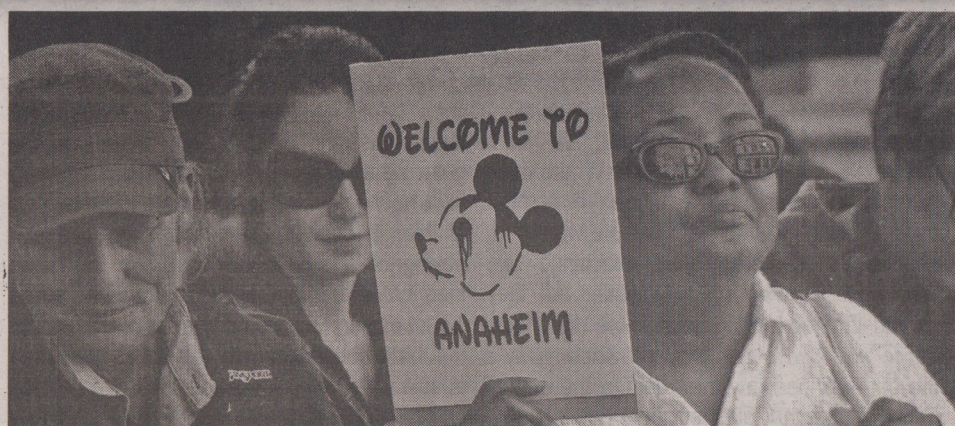
July 31, 2012. In the wake of the uprisings, power again attempts to blunt the active struggle through "dialogue." The mayor of Anaheim visits the site of Diaz's murder and "listens" to the concerns of area residents. Liberal-progressive groups demand more Latino representation on the city council. The slogan "Our Voices Count" sums up the counter-insurgency effort: creating channels for communicating with power, on the one hand, and directing the destructive popular rage into a quantitative dimension. The city council, in turn, convenes a special meeting to hear residents' concerns: "City leaders recognize that there is a need for additional community dialogue and discussion." "Members of the Anaheim community are invited to come and present their thoughts, ideas and recommendations on ways to help improve the city and its relationship with its people, their neighborhoods and their government." How can we police you more effectively, power asks? Such is the nature of "constructive dialogue" between the police and policed, only to be surpassed by the question

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July 22, 2012. A "gang officer" spots a "recognized gang member" in a stolen vehicle. The officers pursue the individual. Shots are exchanged, allegedly. The police kill 21-year-old Joel Acevedo. A handgun is found near the dead man, according to police.

The man who runs is shot in the back. The man who shoots back is also killed. The only certainty is death at the hands of the police.

The counter-insurgency mobilizes. By way of media accounts, the police murders become "incident[s]." Local government bureaucrats and "community leaders" call for "investigations." Investigations by the police, the district attorney, the FBI. The "truth" must be discerned. Media figures attempt to understand and explain the phenomena that took place in the streets. The police attempt to de-legitimize the uprising as the product of "outsiders" to the "community." But the attempt fails when the police's own statistics reveal that the arrestees from Saturday night were overwhelmingly from Anaheim. Making the necessary adjustments, the police identify the uprisings as the product of "gang members." It is now the status of "gang member" that the police ascribe to any person whom is dealt state violence.



avenge her son's death. But, with all due respect, this is an impossibility: the police murder within the law, and therefore by definition police cannot commit murder; they are immune, because in a very real sense, they are the law. "Guilt" and "innocence" are but two faces of the same coin. What's at issue is who has the license of the State to kill. Those executed by police are, by necessity, guilty.

Concerned liberals set to work to figure out what went wrong — how could the crowd's violence have been averted; how can the city reform its police so as to avoid widespread antipathy by the policed? Racists salivate at the idea of the State's brute repression of brown people. The non-profits and community organizations attempt to intervene in the conflict: as the "representatives" of the

And next to the commando, there is the atavistic mounted police, reference to a past form of brute repression. In the shadow of the Happiest Place on Earth, we see that the police are not merely tasked with disciplining populations, but also with annihilating those who refuse to subordinate themselves to the State. Viewed with this lens, the police assassination of Emanuel Diaz was not an aberration, but the elimination of a body that would not submit to law — an entirely rational act within the logic of modern policing.

The *Orange County Register* vigorously extends the counter-insurgency operation, discovering that the outside-agitator narrative is appropriate for the situation. The headline for July 30, 2012, reads: "Most unruly protesters from outside Anaheim, police say: Seven of nine people arrested during Sunday's

Anaheim visits the site of Diaz's murder and "listens" to the concerns of area residents. Liberal-progressive groups demand more Latino representation on the city council. The slogan "Our Voices Count" sums up the counter-insurgency effort: creating channels for communicating with power, on the one hand, and directing the destructive popular rage into a quantitative dimension. The city council, in turn, convenes a special meeting to hear residents' concerns: "City leaders recognize that there is a need for additional community dialogue and discussion." "Members of the Anaheim community are invited to come and present their thoughts, ideas and recommendations on ways to help improve the city and its relationship with its people, their neighborhoods and their government." How can we police you more effectively, power asks? Such is the nature of "constructive dialogue" between the police and policed, only to be surpassed by the question asked by the person colonized by power: now can we police ourselves?

And indeed there is a need to communicate — but only with each other, not *them*. And the communication called for is not of the sort mediated through the pages of the press or the councils of governing bodies. *Communication takes the form of attack against mutual enemies*. The bricks thrown at Anaheim police find their solidaric counterpart in the shattered windows of the police bar in downtown Oakland.

GMO LABELING WHAT'S AT STAKE?

By Compost

Proposition 37 on the November ballot in California "Requires labeling of food sold to consumers made from plants or animals with genetic material changed in specified ways [and] prohibits marketing such food, or other processed food, as 'natural'." Genetically engineered food is a big deal. Yeah, there's a lot of "big" to be worried about these days, but the future of food is indicative of the future.

Monsanto and other big agricultural corporations are conspiring to control food in a way that is evil, stupid and destructive.

Genetic Engineering has been around little

herbicide repeatedly. And as predicted by any sane biologist, weeds have become resistant to the Round-up and now chemical companies are scrambling to legalize crops resistant to their stronger, more toxic herbicides (like 2,4-D, an ingredient in Agent Orange).

In the meantime, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been allowed into the US food supply, without labeling or tracking, onto a mostly un-informed populace. It is estimated that about 70% of processed food in an American supermarket contains some GMOs. They are in non-organic corn, soy,

I once attended a sparse Berkeley City Council meeting that also happened to have a decision before the council about whether to ban from school lunches the milk from cows that had been treated with a genetically engineered growth hormone. I found myself sitting in back of a row of about a dozen unfamiliar suit and tie folks with briefcases. The council decided against banning this milk in the Berkeley Public school system and the row of un-Berkeley like folks simultaneously arose and exited, seemingly quite pleased with themselves.

onto dead soil. Water would be depleted and contaminated and the natural world assaulted by increasingly toxic herbicides. This dystopia could lead to ecosystem collapse and famine.

There are healthy and sustainable ways to produce food. Look to localized permaculture systems. These offer decentralized control of our food, perhaps with more hands-on participation, which can be a health benefit in itself. We can derive food from living natural

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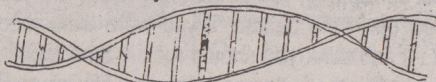
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Monsanto and other big agricultural corporations are conspiring to control food in a way that is evil, stupid and destructive.

Genetic Engineering has been around little more than 30 years. In this short time,



Monsanto and others have managed to legalize and patent these new life forms, exempt them from government testing, avoid labeling, and corner the market on the production of some food staples with their patented, engineered seed.

The results? Over 90% of US grown soy uses "Round-up Ready" seed which is genetically engineered to survive applications of Round-up herbicide. This has facilitated the spraying of millions of pounds of Round-up on crop lands which then leaches into waterways. Our food now contains more herbicide and questionable genetic ingredients. Monsanto has trapped and sued many farmers into a devil's bargain of buying their seed and

herbicide repeatedly. And as predicted by any sane biologist, weeds have become resistant to the Round-up and now chemical companies are scrambling to legalize crops resistant to their stronger, more toxic herbicides (like 2,4-D, an ingredient in Agent Orange).

In the meantime, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been allowed into the US food supply, without labeling or tracking, onto a mostly un-informed populace. It is estimated that about 70% of processed food in an American supermarket contains some GMOs. They are in non-organic corn, soy, canola, cotton and all their by-products, oils, corn syrup, soy sauce, dairy from cows treated with rBST, and sugar beet sweeteners.

And conveniently for the chemical food giants, there are no easy ways to link this with any of the strange new illnesses and allergies that have been occurring. There was NO ONE I knew with a wheat allergy when I was young. Okay, I'm not a professional scientist, but have there been any studies about GMO's effects on our intestinal flora, for instance?

Monsanto and co. are pros at manipulating political and regulatory processes and the media and legal system. A judge just refused to hear a case brought against Monsanto by thousands of farmers and concerned people to protect them against being sued for having been contaminated by Monsanto's GMO seeds, as the Canadian farmer Percy Shmeister was.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

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We can derive food from living natural ecosystems which offer abundance, beauty and enjoyment.

And now Monsanto etc. are throwing millions against the initiative on this fall's California ballot to label food that contains GMOs. Monsanto thinks that people will choose not to buy and eat food with GMOs if they can figure out what foods contain them. And they are right. So far, the American public has been the world's GMO guinea pigs. Given knowledge and choice, we may try to quit.

The way food is produced has major effects. The dystopia of a Monsanto monopoly on food would be horrible. Large farms would grow unhealthy food by pumping chemical fertilizers

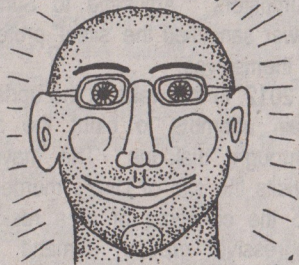
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There are healthy and sustainable ways to produce food. Look to localized permaculture systems. These offer decentralized control of our food, perhaps with more hands-on participation, which can be a health benefit in itself. We can derive food from living natural

ecosystems which offer abundance, beauty and enjoyment. We can be nourished by this earth without destroying it. But we will have to push back against Monsanto. Start your own gardens. Buy local and organic food. Research GMOs. Save your own seeds. Glean and forage. We have fed ourselves like this for ages.

Proposition 37 gives Californians a chance to label GMOs this November. Monsanto will play dirty to defeat it with confusing and powerful TV ads. All we've got is ourselves to retake control of our lives. This matters!!

WHITE PRIVILEGE &



WHOSE
STREETS
?



"Those who have the privilege to know, have the duty to act." - Albert Einstein

By Robnoxious

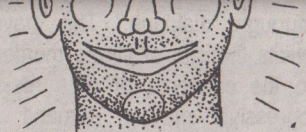
It's a street demonstration in the United States of America and the crowd chants: "Whose streets? OUR streets!" I look around at the sea of faces descended from Europeans and think: these streets were built on stolen land. The burial ground of an indigenous tribe is underneath this street. After 500+ years we are still invaders. If you find yourself in a meeting surrounded by people of the same race and your goal is to save the world, you should start wondering: who are you saving the world for? I look around at this gathering of white Americans and think: this must be what it looked like when Columbus landed here 500 years ago to meet the indigenous tribes who lived here for 50,000 years.

smiled, and in my mind I thought, "Oh no, a black man!" like I should be afraid. Where does that thinking come from? I don't remember anyone telling me that black people were bad, and that's it: the racist teachings we experience growing up are subtle, but they spread thru everything so that we don't even notice when we're being taught racism. Why is the dark skinned guy the villain in the movie? Because the light skinned guys are the good guys, that's just the way it is. It's taken years of being thoughtful about racism to move towards overcoming those feelings. Sometimes I think that the early childhood training I had in racism will always be a part of my mind. I grew up in a world that believed in the Other as less human than Us.

for months, and then go back to the city and get a job and live in a house. Without my white skin, how easy would it be for me to have done all this? If I wanted, I could probably get a high paying job and have lots of money. I've never tried it, but I bet that my skin color would make it a lot easier. Everything I saw growing up told me that I could do anything I wanted, and the people who did whatever they wanted all looked white like me.

I feel burdened sometimes, the basic human burden of being alive, but one burden I don't have to deal with is 500 years of my people being oppressed by another people who are still occupying my land. I don't have to live in a country that my ancestors were brought to against their will and where they were forced to work generation after generation. The United

person of European descent wears a feathered headdress, which mimics the feathered headdress of Native American tribes. Let's say a Native American and a European met up on some path somewhere 500 years ago with no history of exploitation between these people, and the Native American gave the European a beaded headband with feathers in it and the European gave the Native American a necklace with a silver crucifix on it. This would be acculturation, on equal ground. What if the European pointed a gun at the Native American's head and demanded the beaded



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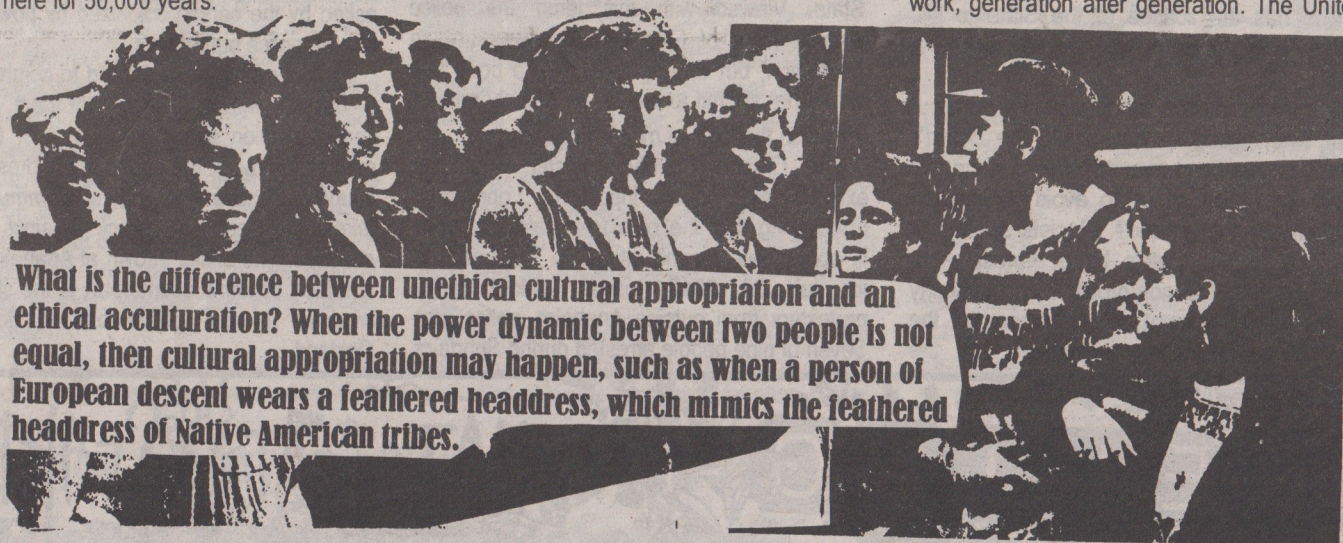
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There is much crossover now. Cultures now mingle at an accelerating rate, so that sometimes it's hard to tell where one started and the other begins. More crossover will continue happening too. It's natural for peoples to share their culture: art, music, language, fashion, technology, and for cultures to create new things out of the fusion. If you think about it, it will be obvious. If you are of European



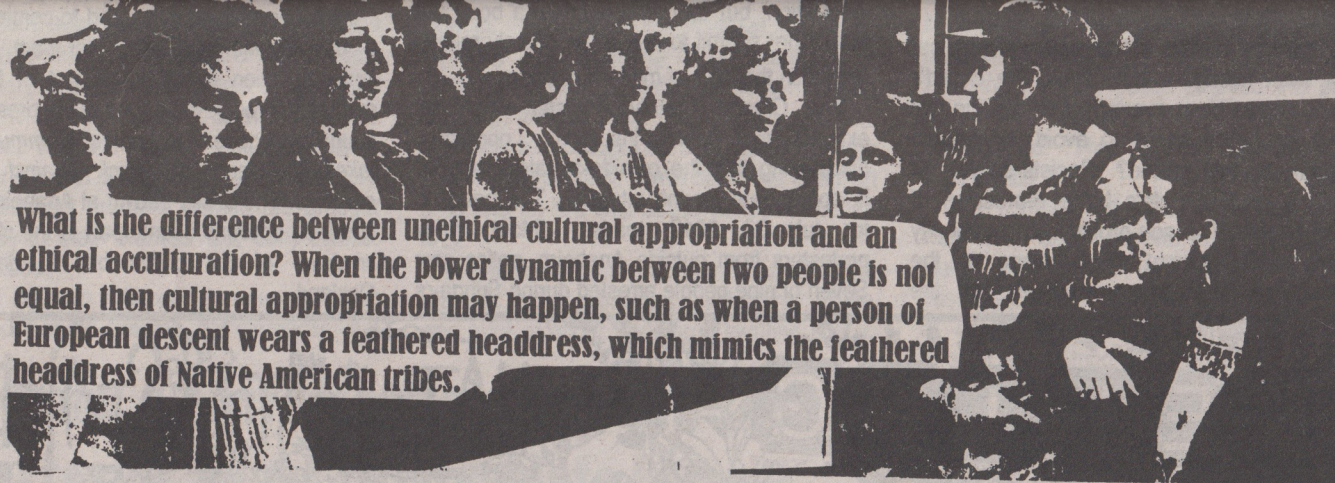
What is the difference between unethical cultural appropriation and an ethical acculturation? When the power dynamic between two people is not equal, then cultural appropriation may happen, such as when a person of European descent wears a feathered headdress, which mimics the feathered headdress of Native American tribes.

We could all forgive and forget if only we had made reparations, righted the wrong, but we are still colonizing this country. Native American reservations are still the poorest places in the nation. The government and corporations take the coal under Native American reservations using deceit. Parking garages are built on top of Native American burial grounds. In Minneapolis the African American community is the most unemployed of all races here. Prison populations for people of color are far higher than for white people. People of color are still treated with prejudice.

It sucks having someone remind you of the privilege you have just because of the race you were born as. A finger points at you and you feel defensive. You! What, who, me? Yes you! Your people committed genocide and ethnocide and your people were slave owners! Okay, it's true, Europeans came here 500 years ago and did all this, and here we are the descendants, but that was before my time. Why do I gotta deal with the fallout from the bad decisions my ancestors made? Well it's true, we're not responsible for the actions of our ancestors, we can't time travel and stop

States was founded on stolen land and stolen labor. Indigenous tribes and African Americans were exploited by our European ancestors, that's how the U.S. achieved dominance in the world textile market, the stepping-stone to later world domination. I am descended from this colonial royalty; my ancestors were the thieves and the murderers. This system of exploitation still exists, and that is why 500 more years of Capitalism won't actually free anyone.

A conclusion that modern feminism has arrived at is this: for one person to be free, all



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I'm privileged to have a job. Privileged to have a house. Privileged to have a car. Privileged to get detained by the cops and be given only a ticket or a warning, not hauled to jail and eventually to prison. I'm privileged to be around other people of European descent who don't judge me because of my race. I'm privileged to have grown up with both parents, and that they are still together. I'm privileged that people look at me and think I'm one of the good guys because my skin is light. Every movie I ever saw growing up depicted dark skinned people as the villains. Racism was always there. Subtle, but always there. Yesterday a black man walked up to me and

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When someone says, "White people take everything, except the burden," it rings true, but it hurts too. I make minimum wage at my job. I bust my ass and there's usually only two digits worth of money in my bank account. I live in a house with six other people cause I can't afford anything else. I'm on food stamps and public health care. I have worked for years busting ass building houses for other people, yet I do not have a house of my own. I also chose to quit jobs and go travel, hitch hike, ride trains, build boats out of trash and live on them

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A conclusion that modern feminism has arrived at is this: for one person to be free, all people must be free. Capitalism doesn't care what race people are, it only demands that there be a small percentage exploiting the large majority. If the small percentage of exploiters is multi-racial, multi-cultural, so be it, Capitalism is happy. The continuation of Capitalism could lead to a racially blind exploitation, where everyone is exploited, without discrimination. Capitalism is like a virus; it will mutate to survive.

The inherent exploitation is so deep in our culture that we don't even notice it. Sports teams are still named after indigenous tribes. Villains in movies are still dark skinned. Individuals participate in cultural appropriation. What is the difference between unethical cultural appropriation and an ethical acculturation? When the power dynamic between two people is not equal, then cultural appropriation may happen, such as when a

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There is much crossover now. Cultures now mingle at an accelerating rate, so that sometimes it's hard to tell where one started and the other begins. More crossover will continue happening too. It's natural for peoples to share their culture: art, music, language, fashion, technology, and for cultures to create new things out of the fusion. If you think about it, it will be obvious. If you are of European descent, don't dress your kids up as Indians for Halloween, and if you feel like you want to pick up rapping, you better think about it. If you grew up in the culture, if you were welcomed into it and think you should rock it, then rock it, and suffer the judgment. Are you flexing your white privilege by appropriating the culture of an oppressed culture, or are you really part of it? If a person of color calls you out on something you're rocking, then take it to heart, think about it, because you are probably not the first clueless colonial they've met.

(Thanks to the Women of Color in Science Fiction panel at Galacticon 2009, and thanks to everyone who participated in the discussion on White Privilege at Idapalooza 2012, and to the article "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh.)
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HAWAII GO HOME

By enola d!

It was raining in Hana, Hawai'i, like it does on most evenings, when some friends and I hitch-hiked as far as we could to get to a party we'd heard about, giggling while getting poured on in the beds of pickup trucks. Having turned off of the highway to a less-trafficked road, we were walking the rest of the way to the land the party was being held on. I'm not much for partying all night in general, and I especially was not then, when I had been going to sleep at dusk and waking up at dawn. But we were on a remote island in the South Pacific, where, as one friend put it, "you take any kind of social situation you can get." There, I was forced to do nothing much more than relax and read books from the library all day. On the way to the party, we were stopped by a man standing in his driveway, telling us that we were on a private road.

"I didn't see any 'private road' signs," one of my friends told him.

"Um.. it's dark, we probably just missed it," I explained, knowing that that was probably not the case, but feeling like I didn't want to piss this guy off any more. I also wanted to respect him. He was a Native man and he was upset that one of his white neighbors was having a party. It seemed like his neighbor had parties

colonization and annexation of Hawai'i, and I was about to read a collection of essays by a Native woman named Huanani Kay-Trask. In one of Kay-Trask's essays about tourism, she writes, "If you are thinking of visiting my homeland, please don't. We don't want or need any more tourists, and we certainly don't like them. If you want to help our cause, pass this message on to your friends."

The things the man on the road said to us about "quality of life" and calling the police are examples of the ways in which Euramerican colonization has drastically changed life on Hawai'i. Hawaiians are left with no choice but to assimilate and work within the system imposed on them starting when James Cook made the islands common geographical knowledge to the rest of the world. With this came a lot of aggressive visitors and the introduction of many things: disease and poisons that the island's inhabitants had previously not known or built immunities to, killing off over 90% of the Natives in the first 100 years of European contact; Capitalism—money and the idea of ownership, a lesson taught by the cession of Native land by foreigners for cashcrop plantations; Mass migration of people brought in to work on those plantations, since the Native population was declining so rapidly; weapons and the idea (or threat) of war; Christianity and the



practicing their culture the way they always had; Images of volcanoes, Hula dancers, legends, rituals. This is the image we are shown of Hawai'i as outsiders, or even as visiting tourists not venturing far from the resorts, and I had never challenged it. It was always peripheral, always untalked about. I had never read a political piece about the status of Hawai'i until I was there, searching the Hawaiiana section in the Makawao library. I felt ashamed and ignorant. My privilege had allowed me the comfort of never wondering how things got to be the way they are. In fact, I had never known how things are. The image of Hawaiian Natives as tribal primitives is so common even today, so fetishized, though forced into near extinction by those who present its iconography. Since just after Hawai'i's annexation, tourism campaigns have relied heavily on the perpetuation of staged images of Natives as an unevolved people taking part in primitive practices that had actually been outlawed or otherwise altered by Euramerican invasion and acculturation. These images are typically of beautiful Native women posed as if they were dancing the Hula. The prevailing scientific racism of the

tropical paradise." "There's nothing we can do about it. Leaving won't help anything." "I totally have a Native friend." "Maui has a plastic bag ban, what else could you possibly ask for?" "The colonization was actually a good thing because it helped them defend themselves from other colonizers." And — this is the one I heard the most — "It depends what our intentions are." If we don't intend to silence a culture by increasing the number of outsiders whose very presence is a reminder of that culture's silencing, then we won't actually do that, will we? Who do these people think they are kidding?

These people are living the good life and don't want politics to get in their way. They don't want to think about how living in Hawai'i is good for them but is not always so good for the people who have a real connection to the land. One of the few people who was not a foreigner I got a ride with was a woman going to visit her father in the hospital. She must have had ten rosaries hanging from her rear view mirror. On her dashboard were pocket-sized pictures of her darling children, so she would always see them as she drove. I was hitch hiking with a woman I'd just met who had been living in Hawaii for a few months. The two

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than relax and read books from the library all day. On the way to the party, we were stopped by a man standing in his driveway, telling us that we were on a private road.

"I didn't see any 'private road' signs," one of my friends told him.

"Um... it's dark, we probably just missed it," I explained, knowing that that was probably not the case, but feeling like I didn't want to piss this guy off any more. I also wanted to respect him. He was a Native man and he was upset that one of his white neighbors was having a party. It seemed like his neighbor had parties

came a lot of aggressive visitors and the introduction of many things: disease and poisons that the island's inhabitants had previously not known or built immunities to, killing off over 90% of the Natives in the first 100 years of European contact; Capitalism—money and the idea of ownership, a lesson taught by the cession of Native land by foreigners for cashcrop plantations; Mass migration of people brought in to work on those plantations, since the Native population was declining so rapidly; weapons and the idea (or threat) of war; Christianity and the

shown of Hawai'i as outsiders, or even as visiting tourists not venturing far from the resorts, and I had never challenged it. It was always peripheral, always untalked about. I had never read a political piece about the status of Hawai'i until I was there, searching the Hawaiiana section in the Makawao library. I felt ashamed and ignorant. My privilege had allowed me the comfort of never wondering how things got to be the way they are. In fact, I had never known how things are. The image of Hawaiian Natives as tribal primitives is so common even today, so fetishized, though forced into near extinction by those who present its iconography. Since just after Hawai'i's annexation, tourism campaigns have relied heavily on the perpetuation of staged images of Natives as an unevolved people taking part in primitive practices that had actually been outlawed or otherwise altered by Euramerican invasion and acculturation. These images are typically of beautiful Native women posed as if they were dancing the Hula. The prevailing scientific racism of the period of Hawai'i's annexation and early tourism used skull structure of different racial demographics to justify a peoples' mistreatment by Europeans, stating that no race was evolved as the anglo-teutronics. "Scientists" of the time asserted that Hawaiians were closer to caucasian blood than that of any other "lesser" race. Thus not seen as lesser by race, Native Hawaiians could be seen as lesser by practice if the illusion of their primitivism alongside modern society could be withheld. The allure of standing in the sand watching a foreign person practice an archaic ritual while knowing that the next day you could put your shoes back on and take a plane back to your color television was a sure hit.

When I got there, I wondered where that Hawaiian culture that tempts tourists all over to visit was. I didn't see it or hear it until I was soaking in a hotel hot tub I'd snuck into with my mainland friends. It was all around me there, a script performed by actors for the pleasure of elite dining tourists. But the culture I experienced elsewhere on Maui was that of entitled white neo-bohemians: The surfer bra, the burner, the mid-life crisis purger, the raw foodist who can afford it, the voluntarily impoverished. And they were all so happy; they were all so calm; nothing was wrong. Since these were the people I was meeting

plastic bag ban, what else could you possibly ask for?" "The colonization was actually a good thing because it helped them defend themselves from other colonizers." And — this is the one I heard the most — "It depends what our intentions are." If we don't intend to silence a culture by increasing the number of outsiders whose very presence is a reminder of that culture's silencing, then we won't actually do that, will we? Who do these people think they are kidding?

These people are living the good life and don't want politics to get in their way. They don't want to think about how living in Hawai'i is good for them but is not always so good for the people who have a real connection to the land. One of the few people who was not a foreigner I got a ride with was a woman going to visit her father in the hospital. She must have had ten rosaries hanging from her rear view mirror. On her dashboard were pocket-sized pictures of her darling children, so she would always see them as she drove. I was hitch hiking with a woman I'd just met who had been living in Haiku for a few months. The two of us were happily unemployed, but for the woman giving us a ride, unemployment would mean not being able to provide for her sick father or three children. She told us that she had left Maui once, but had never left Hawai'i, not because she was in a tropical paradise and had no desire to visit other places, but because she never had the opportunity. She smiled at us and quickly closed her mouth, insecure about her missing teeth, a reminder of an abusive relationship. She was one of the kindest, most sincere people I have ever met. And she didn't say "aloha" to us.

Few of the Native Hawaiians I met spoke Hawaiian to tourists. The times I encountered overly used words like "aloha" and "mahalo," they were coming from white mainland tourists or transplants, or were printed on receipts in the mall trash cans. These are people and situations incapable of understanding what the words mean. Cultural assimilation cannot be reversed like that. Euramericans came to Hawai'i and forced the people of the islands into Christianity and capitalism. And now Euramericans are going to Hawai'i and willingly choosing to adopt a slaughtered language and what whisper of revived lifestyle they please; setting things that don't suit them aside, incorporating their own favorites from

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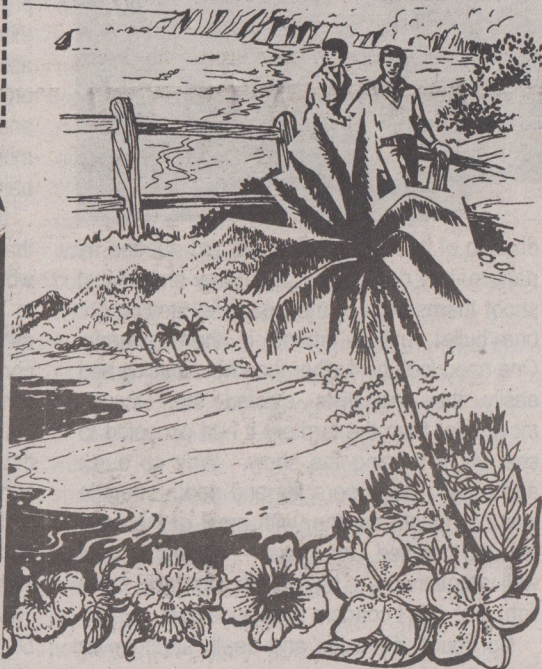
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a lot. He had asked him not to have any more, the pulsing electronic music vibrating through the earth and keeping him awake too often, but the person throwing the party was not going to stop.

"He has no respect, he's not even Hawaiian!" The man told us, and then he asked us how long we had been on Maui. Three weeks. We are not Hawaiian either. He

demonization and consequent banning of Hawaiian spiritual and cultural practices. The dispossession of Native land began with a dream of importing sugar cane and pineapples to the United States which continued through the 20th century as the military took over many areas, including the entire island of Kaho'olawe, and is still real today in the ever-expanding tourist industry. As things are now



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"He has no respect, he's not even Hawaiian!" The man told us, and then he asked us how long we had been on Maui. Three weeks. We are not Hawaiian either. He said that it was dark, we had never been on his road before, and he was worried that we would wander onto his family's land (His whole family lived there, he told us) and "mess up their quality of life." He said that we would have to go back and that, if we saw the person throwing the party (who, of course, we did not actually know), we should tell him that he'll call the cops if he keeps sending people up the road. One of the four of us was angry at this man, but the others quietly apologized and turned back, the angry one in tow. I didn't know anything about where we were going, what the relations between that person and his neighbors were or anything like that. But I did know — not from school or the newspaper, or from conversations with other people on Maui, but from books in the libraries — that non-Natives have caused a lot of damage to Native people in Hawai'i and that I didn't want to represent that or perpetuate that. I had just finished reading a non-biased account of the

demonization and consequent banning of Hawaiian spiritual and cultural practices. The dispossession of Native land began with a dream of importing sugar cane and pineapples to the United States which continued through the 20th century as the military took over many areas, including the entire island of Kaho'olawe, and is still real today in the ever-expanding tourist industry. As things are now, there are something like 7 million tourists who visit Hawai'i each year, while the population of Hawai'i is around 1.2 million. The land continues to be encroached upon by outside interests which destroy endangered plant and animal species through destroying their habitat. These species are further endangered by the introduction of invasive species. There are entire towns dedicated to resorts, elaborate second — or third — homes stand vacant 10 months out of the year while folks are arrested for sleeping on the beaches their families have slept on for generations. Elaborate cruise ships dock beside endless shopping centers a few miles away, and there are plans in place to expand some of the airports.

When thinking about Hawai'i, even as an anarchist adult, I embarrassingly would recreate images the mass media had put in my mind, from the Brady Bunch to the Tiki Room at Disneyland: images of Native people

demographics to justify a peoples mistreatment by Europeans, stating that no race was evolved as the anglo-teutronics. "Scientists" of the time asserted that Hawaiians were closer to caucasian blood than that of any other "lesser" race. Thus not seen as lesser by race, Native Hawaiians could be seen as lesser by practice if the illusion of their primitivism alongside modern society could be withheld. The allure of standing in the sand watching a foreign person practice an archaic ritual while knowing that the next day you could put your shoes back on and take a plane back to your color television was a sure hit.

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woman giving us a ride, unemployment would mean not being able to provide for her sick father or three children. She told us that she had left Maui once, but had never left Hawai'i, not because she was in a tropical paradise and had no desire to visit other places, but because she never had the opportunity. She smiled at us and quickly closed her mouth, insecure about her missing teeth, a reminder of an abusive relationship. She was one of the kindest, most sincere people I have ever met. And she didn't say "aloha" to us.

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The time I spent on the island of Maui was so peaceful, so healing, so good for me in so many ways. And I will not go back. If I'd known then what I learned during that trip, I would have never gone in the first place.

Recommended reading:

From a Native Daughter, Huanani Kay-Trask
Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen, Queen Liliuokalani
Aloha Betrayed, Noenoe K. Silva
The Blount Report, James Blount
"Picturing 'Hawai'i': The 'Ideal' Native and the Origins of Tourism, Jane C. Desmond
Cultural Appreciation of Cultural Appropriation?, zine available on zinelibrary.info



OCCUPY the status quo is the sickness



By Rand Gould

As soon as I heard the slogan, "The 99% against the 1%," I knew any hope that the Occupy movement would affect real change was over because very few Americans qualify as members of the 99% so far as the world is concerned. This liberal platitude was quickly followed-up by demands for reforms and a deluge of pseudo-Occupy organizations, such as "Occupy for Jobs," *ad nauseum*, in a sickeningly rapid co-optation of the Occupy movement into a fight for more jobs, more commodities, more of our "fair" share of the loot stolen from the rest of the world's peoples. Proving, once again, that feigned ignorance of other human beings' impoverishment is simply a ploy to abet a greedy and self-serving agenda. Occupy, shmoccupy!

We've all heard the excuses coming from the so-called "middle class" in America: "I'm only one person. I have a family to take care of. I need to look to my own survival. What can I do?" I've heard it from my parents and peers for years. Selfishness couched in the terms of apathy and despair, with the despair stemming from the realization that they're really just members of the working class after all. A class that's rapidly losing its economic footing after being thrown into the global competition for low wage jobs by the transnational corporations' quest to squeeze more capital, and more money, out of labor. Too many people, like the American working class, are willing to place their foot on another's neck in order to get a leg up. Competition is the bane of the working class and exactly why all movements towards real worldwide economic equity are so easily

Once the storm clouds cleared, the capitalists proceeded to co-opt and buy-off the workers' leaders via the rewards of trade union leadership and partial control of pension funds. An easy enough task because, with a few extra bucks in their pockets and the illusion of job security and pensions, most workers went contentedly back to being wage slaves. "Two cars in every garage and a chicken in every pot" for the workers and the driver's seat for

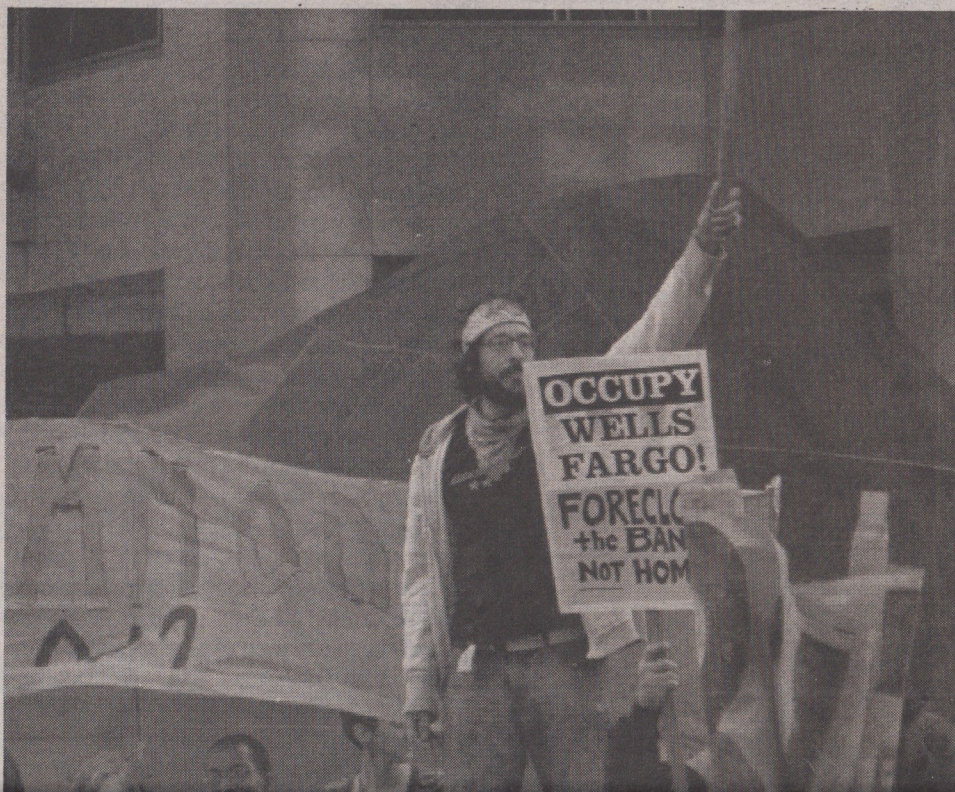
capital. Nothing will change, that is, until the working class starts throwing stockbrokers and bankers out of Wall Street windows and Egyptian generals into the Nile with crocodiles, and takes back the fruits of its stolen labor. Strong medicine, indeed, but the only cure for the SICKness!

If anyone thinks that the kleptocracy that runs the planet is going to allow an equitable

the 22,000 children who die every day from starvation and malnutrition on this planet. Yet, nothing is done about it. And it's only going to get worse with giant transnational corporations gaining more and more control over arable farmland and fresh water sources (when they aren't polluting them!) Moreover, the planet is suffering from severe weather fluctuations due to global warming, as evidenced by the rapid melting of polar icecaps and glaciers, resulting in unseasonable droughts and floods that

effect the undeveloped countries the most. The fact that the corporate oil-based economy is responsible for this is rarely pointed out and, again, nothing is being done about it. For example, I suspect most of the Occupiers own cars and used them to get to the various Occupy sites, with the possible exception of Occupy Wall Street [Ed. Note: and Occupy Oakland, where bicyclists ruled!!].

So long as they get a cut, and don't have to think about the consequences too much, most people in the so-called industrialized democracies of the West and Japan are fine with ignoring the deaths of these children and the widespread destruction of the planet for corporate profits. They've found it to their benefit to go along with the SICKness. As such, they've no problem with their leaders' innumerable, unending and undeclared wars for markets and resources. No problem with a president who orders torture or one who orders extra-judicial murders, including the

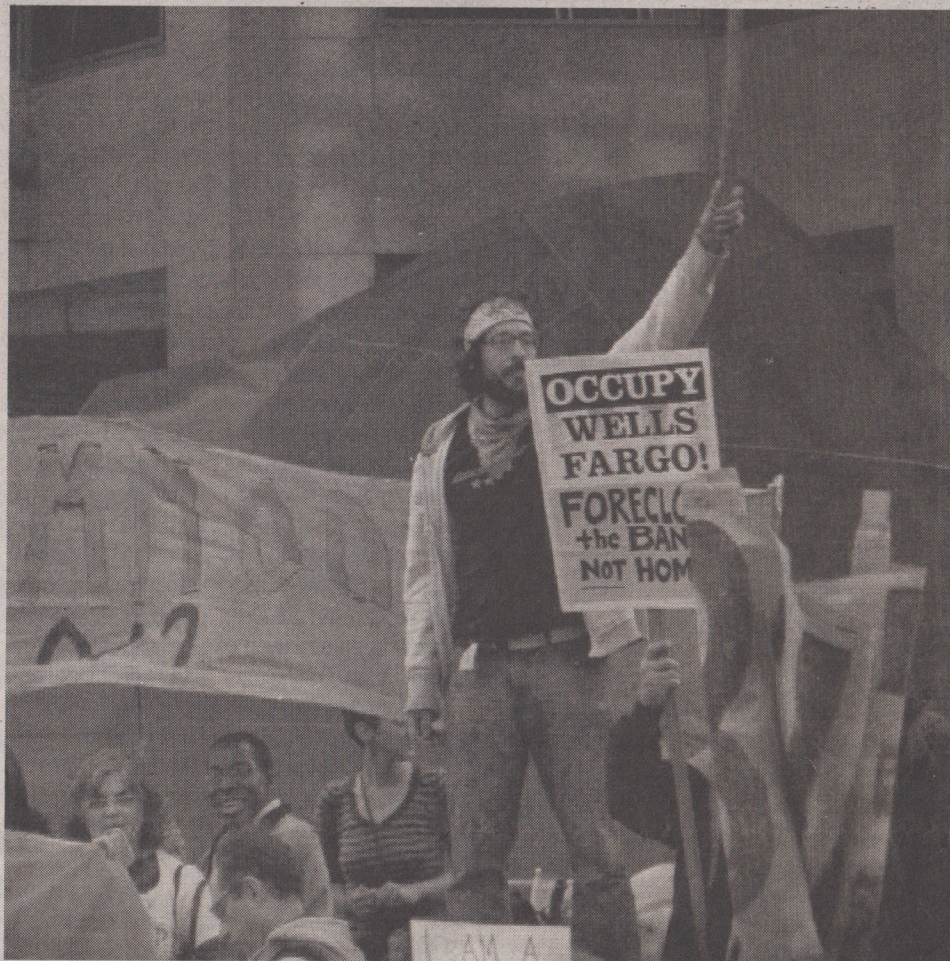


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Of course, we've seen this all before. A few bones are thrown to the workers in order to gain their acquiescence in the corporate raging and pillaging of the planet at the expense of everyone else – the status quo! This was FDR's much-vaunted New Deal. A "deal" never intended to be permanent. It was merely a temporary shelter designed by liberals so that the thieves known as capitalists, or the Scum-in-Charge (SICK), could weather the working class storms sweeping the country and the world at the time. Never mind that the workers created all the wealth and the rich merely expropriated it through financial manipulations as obvious as

capitalists proceeded to co-opt and buy-off the workers' leaders via the rewards of trade union leadership and partial control of pension funds. An easy enough task because, with a few extra bucks in their pockets and the illusion of job security and pensions, most workers went contentedly back to being wage slaves. "Two cars in every garage and a chicken in every pot" for the workers and the driver's seat for



the SICK, who immediately set about taking those "few bones" back.

This will happen every time if, when we gain the upper hand, we allow the capitalists, who don't work except at stealing from us, to continue to amass and control capital or money. Nothing will ever change. Not in America, not in Tunisia, Greece or Spain, all the Occupiers and Indignados, notwithstanding. This is the status quo, the SICKness, again, being proven-out, as the people initially in power remain in power in all the aforementioned countries, with their power

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In fact, if Occupy has shown us anything, it's that the only problem most Americans have is when their extremely high-paying jobs, relative to the rest of the world's, seem to be going away. So long as most American workers continue to buy into the "American Dream" and blindly accept the control of billions of dollars by thieves like Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, and the Walton family as part of that dream, then human life, if not the planet itself, is doomed. No doubt, Americans, as a people, are down with the SICKness!

Write the author at Rand Gould C-187131, *Thump* Community, 4500 10th St, Oakland, CA 94612.

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division of its resources, aided and abetted by participatory democracy, then they should just shoot themselves in the head, as they've got one bullet rattling around in there already. One need look no further than how quickly and easily the capitalists evicted the Occupy movement from the territory it had occupied to see who's running the show. Why so quick and easy? Because a life and death struggle was not fought as one, with most of the well-fed and coddled Occupiers — no matter now well-intentioned — having no stomach for a fight that didn't concern their appetites!

No doubt, it's a life and death struggle for

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Write the author at Rand Gould C-187131, Thumb Correctional Facility, 3225 John Conley Dr. Lapeer, MI 48446.

BLACK

BLOC

BREAKS

WINDOWS

Continued from Page 1

number of highly appropriate targets and eventually turned onto a particularly loathsome stretch of Valencia Street. Valencia is ground zero in the negative class transformation of the formerly working class Mission and on Valencia, more high-end eateries and stores were paint-bombed and had their windows broken. Expensive cars were also trashed. The Mission District police station was paint-bombed and some of its windows were broken as well. According to the capitalist news media, more than 30 stores and restaurants were vandalized. Only one person was arrested, and this person was quickly released.

This event was an excellent first step.

Unfortunately there was no second step:

The people who did the April 30th action made no subsequent effort to communicate their reasons for indulging in mass vandalism, thus robbing their efforts of all credibility. Evidently they said nothing because they had

nothing to say. Their mass vandalism spree could have been a foot in the door for a larger message against the gentrification of the Mission in particular and against capitalist society in general, but nothing more was heard from them. With this lapse into characteristic

**rowdy demos on
Valencia Street
during the dinner
hour to disrupt
the pleasures of
the table for the
bourgies**

complacency and silence, in their passivity and juvenile ineptitude the wannabe insurrectionary vandals handed a huge propaganda victory to both the Mission's bourgeois invaders and to

the corporate news media, who were able to portray the event as an exercise in self-indulgent adolescent nihilism. This silence of the lambs also left an opening for the event to be denounced by obnoxious liberalish elements in the local Occupy movement, who were given center stage by the dumb vandals to decry the vandalism in any way they choose. In fact, people I spoke with at random, both around the neighborhood and at Occupy Oakland events at Oscar Grant Plaza surmised that the police themselves were behind the April 30th vandalism action. This seems absurd, but the silence of the vandals and their abject social ineptitude led to this.

In an anti-gentrification fight, time is of the essence in all things. In a larger sense, public high-profile anti-gentrification actions have to begin before the transformation of an area has become irreversible. And in an action like April 30th, the larger objectives that motivated the action's authors—if indeed they had any

motivations beyond providing themselves with entertainment—have to be communicated while the event is still fresh in people's minds. This would have meant some kind of transparently clear public statement within a few days of April 30th. No such statement was forthcoming.

As I write this, in mid-September, it's been four and a half months since the April 30th nocturnal vandalism spree, and there has been no subsequent noticeable public action against the gentrification of the Mission. The vandalism spree did not lead to any new resistance. Forms that public collective resistance could still take include rowdy demos on Valencia Street during the dinner hour on Friday and Saturday nights to disrupt the pleasures of the table for the bourgeois, and big public neighborhood meetings, and sustained picket lines outside of the business offices and home addresses of egregious gentrifiers—all of these in combination would be best.

On Two Wheels

some words of encouragement for folks who want to bicycle (more)

By Roman Rimer

I have not driven a car in over ten years. This has been difficult as I was brought up in a car-worshipping society. While some people had photos of cars on the walls of their room, I opted for glam metal boys with long hair and makeup, completely vehicle-free. From the time I was a child, I was engulfed in apprehension of cars, from crossing the street in the suburbs to being a passenger.

Although I wanted to achieve the maturity

one day a week can help. And just as with anything else, the more practice you have the more confident you will become.

At around eight years old I began bicycling with a friend of mine, Miriam, in the Chicago suburbs. It was wonderful to have the independence — to choose when and where we could go and explore. But then I moved and outgrew my childhood bike and I stopped bicycling.

It wasn't until 2009, roughly twenty years

for doing something I was afraid of and becoming the person I wanted to be.

As a child of the '80's, I was brainwashed into thinking I had to live a certain way and depend on those in "power" for my well-being. I was taught I had to look and be a certain way to be acceptable. This was tied into giving money to corporations.

But I've learned that the products they are selling won't bring me joy. If someone gave me a brand new car, I wouldn't drive it because it

make money by selling oil. Just because we don't see the violence firsthand, doesn't mean it's not connected.

Imagine if even 10% of the cars were off the road what kind of a change we would see. Hitchhiking and ridesharing, especially with the advancement of social networking, should be commonplace. Spend an hour on the freeway and see how many cars with extra seats pass you by. I did! It sucked. Folks did stop, but they were in the minority. I feel humans have more than enough to share, yet everyone has their private metal boxes. So many people are going the same direction, yet separately.

I understand wanting alone time, I understand fear of others, yet look at what this fear of change and lack of trust amounts to — the unnecessary heartbreaking pollution of our fierce planet. And one of my favorite sayings every time you complain about being in traffic is to remember that you ARE traffic.

This is not a car vs. bike argument, because there is no need — obviously bikes win. This is more a call for those of us on two wheels to remember it is worth it, despite aggressive drivers, getting doored, unfriendly bike and subway compatibility and lack of bike lanes compared to cars. How about a freeway for bikes? One can bike down the side of the Highway 101 — why not allow this elsewhere? Minneapolis had something like this and it was great. Copenhagen is building one, too.

There is enough antagonism out there. The more bicyclists there are on the road the more confident we can become. Simply because cars rule the road and are larger and louder (and smellier) does not mean bicycles deserve less room and less safety.

As my friend Nogga told me, as I struggled to follow him weaving in and out of car traffic

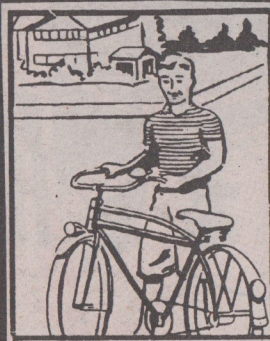
A BICYCLE IS A VEHICLE AND A MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION FOLLOWING RULES OF SAFE RIDING SHOULD BE OBSERVED



Always use the streets as a place to socialize and meet people. Talk fast and ride slow.



Never speak to motorists who look suspicious or offer you candy. Stop for red lights if you feel like it.



Wear striped shirts for fashion and visibility.



Use your sense of balance to keep from falling over. Always avoid spillage of internal tissue.



Pretend you are flying through space at warp speed. Imagine that you are invincible.

and independence I imagined driving a car would bring me, the stress of being behind the wheel of a metal box that runs on gas felt unnatural. I was often nervous in the few years I drove. There was the fear of hurting others or miscommunicating with other drivers on the road; often the fear of not making it to where I needed to be on time. It was difficult to be present given all the stimuli and "power" I had simply by the pressure of my foot on the pedal.

after I'd began to bike that I resumed bicycling in New York after my friend, Tom, who had a knack for finding abandoned bikes, encouraged me start up again. I was terrified, of course. It's a very fast city, sidewalks, streets, buildings, non-stop motion, frequent crowds. There are a lot of people, and an overwhelming intensity is a permanent resident of the city; it's in the air. I wouldn't say people in New York are mean, just frequently in a hurry, which is often interpreted as being

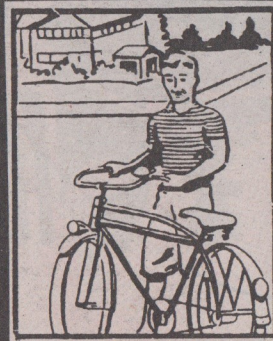
wouldn't make me into the attractive actor from all the commercials wearing fancy clothes and landing the woman of my dreams. I'm more into dudes at this juncture and one does not need a fucking car to be attractive. If I were behind the wheel I would still be nervous and thinking to myself, "what the fuck am I doing driving this SUV? And where is my bike??" But as much as I try to avoid advertisements, they find their way to me. The message is clear; Conform, conform, conform.



Always use the streets as a place to socialize and meet people. Talk fast and ride slow.



Never speak to motorists who look suspicious or offer you candy. Stop for red lights if you feel like it.



Wear striped shirts for fashion and visibility.



Use your sense of balance to keep from falling over. Always avoid spillage of internal tissue.



Pretend you are flying through space at warp speed. Imagine that you are invincible.

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Rushing from place to place seems to be commonplace. After living in New York City for nine years (where thankfully it was easy to be car-less) I found the constant busyness to be draining. How many people have been injured or killed simply because others behind the wheel were rushing to get to or from work? This saddens me given that so many people don't even find their jobs fulfilling. In a race to support ourselves, we end up hurting others before even getting to the office.

I've been able to make it where I needed to go via bike, public transportation, hitchhiking or finding folks who were already heading the same way. While this might not be an option for everyone, beginning to bike — or simply biking more has made my life that much better, healthier, less stressful and I encourage all who are able to do the same. It doesn't have to be all or nothing, even biking one way or

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While many people bike in New York, it still wasn't ideal. The bike lanes were few and far between. I remember being excited to find them, though often they were filled with potholes and occasionally oblivious pedestrians. Sometimes they would be blocked by taxis or the triple threat of bike lane blocking police on horses (gross & infuriating for multiple reasons), but it still became the quickest, most affordable way to get around.

Months before I started biking in NY I pictured myself arriving at a theater I frequented via bike. Perhaps it's how some people see themselves in fantasies of arriving on the red carpet — getting out of a limo. My fantasy was simply to arrive outside an improv theater on a bicycle. Maybe I should have aimed higher. But when I started bicycling, every time I pulled up on my bike I felt *magical*

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Humans have more than enough to share, yet everyone has their private metal boxes.

One reason bicycling is still looked at in many places as merely an "alternative" is because there is less profit to be made. Sure, there are the overpriced high end bike stores that are more concerned with making money than getting more people to safely bike — and they can go fuck themselves — yet there is not the weekly trip to the gas station, the insurance, the smog checks.

I think of how many people whose lives have been lost because greedy people want to

understand wanting alone time. I understand fear of others, yet look at what this fear of change and lack of trust amounts to — the unnecessary heartbreaking pollution of our fierce planet. And one of my favorite sayings every time you complain about being in traffic is to remember that you ARE traffic.

This is not a car vs. bike argument, because there is no need — obviously bikes win. This is more a call for those of us on two wheels to remember it is worth it, despite aggressive drivers, getting doored, unfriendly bike and subway compatibility and lack of bike lanes compared to cars. How about a freeway for bikes? One can bike down the side of the Highway 101 — why not allow this elsewhere? Minneapolis had something like this and it was great. Copenhagen is building one, too.

There is enough antagonism out there. The more bicyclists there are on the road the more confident we can become. Simply because cars rule the road and are larger and louder (and smellier) does not mean bicycles deserve less room and less safety.

As my friend Nogga told me, as I struggled to follow him weaving in and out of car traffic

on DeKalb, a busy street in downtown Brooklyn, "You have to be aggressive. You have every right to be here." True on a bike, as well as other situations. Everyone has a right to be here, even those without the ability, financial or otherwise, to be behind a wheel.

Finally, this is a call for those who are scared or don't know how to ride. I was once there, too. I look forward to riding alongside you wherever and whenever that may be.

FAILS

TO

MAKE

IMPACT

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An article in the 'New York Times' about the current tech-boom-generated gentrification of San Francisco compares the tech boom of the late 1990's and the tech boom of today, saying, "...Back then, antigentrification posters appeared in the Mission urging people to vandalize luxury cars parked in the area...few marks of protest have occurred this time..." ('New Tech Boom Brings Jobs But Also Worries,' NYT, June 4)

Barely a month after the April 30th vandalism spree, the event was completely forgotten, and not perceived as a credible threat to the galloping gentrification of one of San Francisco's last remaining working class areas. Indeed, April 30th compares poorly to the much smaller but *sustained* effort of the Mission Yuppie Eradication Project of the late 1990's. The MYEP, with fewer than a handful of people in a long-term effort, did more to publicize gentrification as a class-conflict issue than did a hoard of one-night-standers in April



A useful critique of the MYEP can be found at: www.infoshop.org/myep/love_index.html

In a period of relative social peace, authentic revolutionary extremist action is all about communication. It is about communication to the virtual complete exclusion of all else. If an action or event fails

to communicate, then it has failed completely—and it doesn't matter how much fun it was for the people doing it. Subjectively, radical individuals have to try to communicate an uncompromising subversive message, on as wide a scale as possible, of direct relevance to the mundane everyday life concerns of

mainstream working people. By this measure the April 30th Mission District vandalism event was an abject failure. To some degree, it even represented a brief 'colonization' of a real world problem by the 100% American / consumer society / all-entertainment-all-the-time ethos of the Black Bloc.

Black Bloc tactics are solely for the fleeting entertainment of the people who take part in them. They communicate nothing to the world at large. They lead nowhere. They offer nothing to build on. Mainstream working people aren't going to adopt Black Bloc tactics, or join the Black Bloc at protest ghetto events.

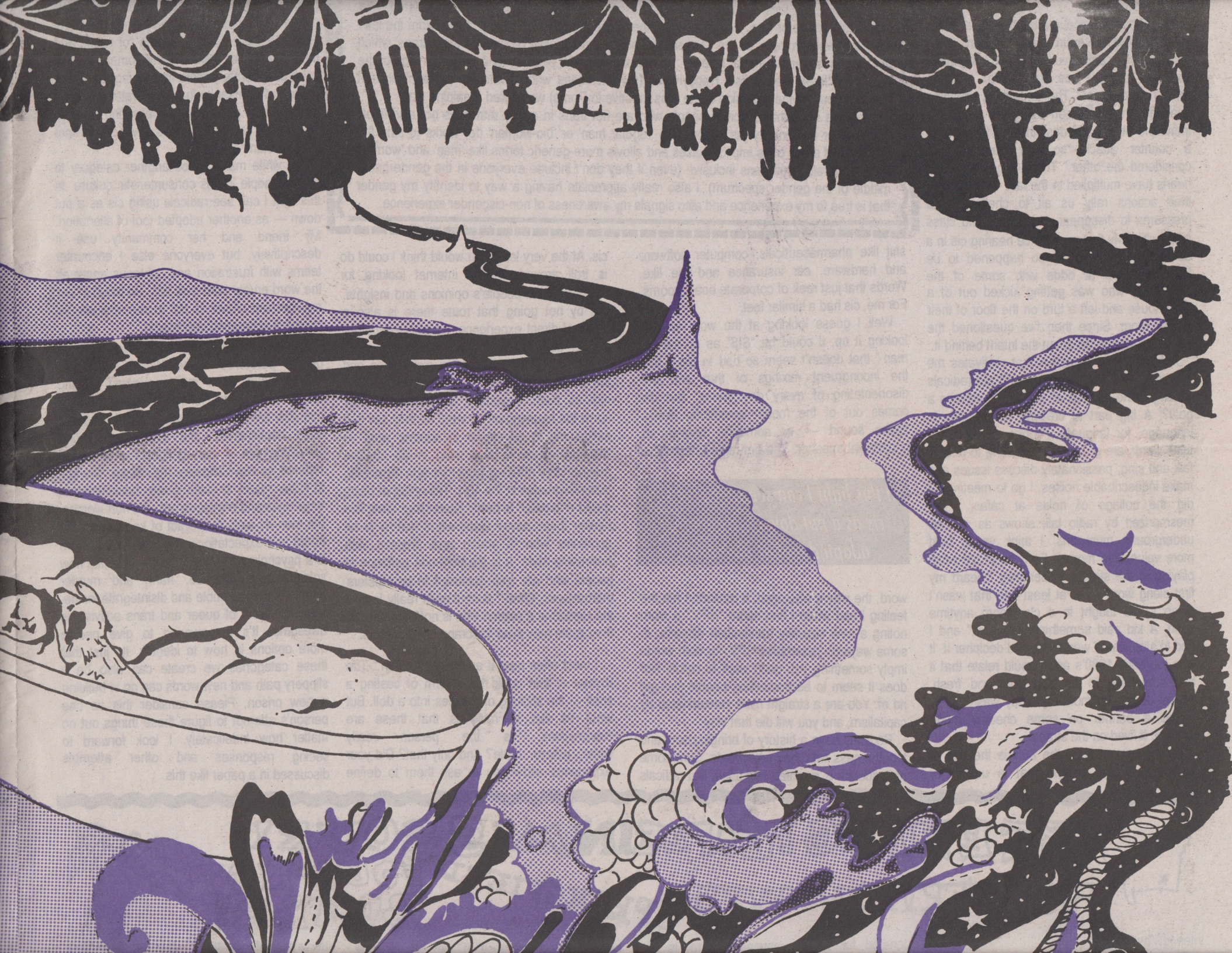
The lack of credibility and commitment and failure of imagination seen in the April 30th Mission District vandalism spree is a symptom of the fact that a society gets the dissidents that it deserves. A society that proclaims that being entertained is the highest possible form of human aspiration gets a brand of ersatz radicalism that loyally mirrors this.













Love Who You Will Say What You Must

New Words as INSULT or ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

by robert eggplant

The motivation of this article was obliterated on the night we were proof reading for a project due the next day. This article — observing the phenomenon of radicals using the prefix “cis,” was in the back of my mind for weeks. The central point I wished to make is that I only hear people using the term in a derogatory, angry manner, as a sneer, a put down. But when I off-handedly mentioned this analysis to a good friend who was helping proofread, I was given another perspective. “My housemates use the word all the time and it’s more clinical — detached”. That’s good I thought, now I don’t have to write an embarrassing rant.

I’ve primarily encountered cis as a prefix placed before the noun ‘man’, or ‘men’, often paired with the adjective ‘white’ and it seems to connote “straight” as in vanilla, man & wife...heterosexual? The underlying meaning depends on the person using the word. My friend the other night described its function as a counter attack “so that trans is not considered the other.” Trans-Gendered brave hearts have multiplied in the last 40 years and their actions rally us all to challenge the pressures to disappear and accept 2nd class citizenship. My first experience hearing cis in a derogatory manner just so happened to be from someone at odds with some of the community who was getting kicked out of a local house and left a turd on the floor of their former room. Since then I’ve questioned the word, and wondered about the intent behind it.

A fundamental question that motivates me to write this is ‘what kind of world are radicals making in the process of working to achieve a goal?’ A big part of creating new worlds is

international trade. Mostly names for products of dubious worth; they represent the fact that common day-to-day words were eaten up by patents. People couldn’t name their garbage after a familiar mythological character or something in the natural world anymore, so instead a hybrid word would be used. I’m thinking of all sorts of alien words used to sell

generally use words and ideas that encourage pluralism. Think of a rainbow. They tend to encourage people to identify with others across boundaries.

A part of me could have started this article with an investigation; drawn up a list of intelligent people I know sharp on trans issues and throw them a couple of questions about

themselves? Scruffy Frank rudely hitting on you at the party just might be a FTM transguy who is of mixed Irish and Navaho stock. His actions may be shitty, but why should radicals do the border checking of identity politics?

If I may mention as an aside, I think there is some discrepancy in labeling people white. Just what does it mean to be white in the “West”? One analysis is that white is all about assimilation. Distinctions of people’s ancestors are set aside for membership in the great white hope. In losing cultural distinctions one is more easily controlled. There is a difference between European people you know, be it Finnish or Spanish. The white question spirals out and ruins the harmony worldwide. Plenty of people get put down for being “of color” and having a “white” inside. Many communities of color also berate people for looking too white. It’s a kind of insanity that desperately needs a dissent. If a person sucks let’s find a more imaginative put down, that is, if we choose not to understand them.

Cis white man can be another category to shelve people in this consumeristic culture. In this light I can see radicals using cis as a put down — as another adopted tool of alienation. My friend and her community use it descriptively, but everyone else I encounter teems with frustration and righteous anger as the word erupts from their lips. So much in our environment allows us not to see how we are complicit in creating oppression.

For the people angry at the insensitivity of people perceived to be *White, Male*, and *Heterosexual*, allow me to suggest reading Shere Hite’s work. Her Hite Reports from the mid 70’s are pretty common in free boxes and

ANOTHER EXPERIENCE OF CIS

by Kermit

I first heard the term cis six years ago from trans friends and have identified as a queer cisman since that time. Cis or cisgendered describes people who are not transgendered, who still identify, more or less, with the gender they were assigned at birth. It comes from the latin word ‘cis’ which means ‘on the near side of’ and is the opposite of the latin word ‘trans’ which means ‘across’ or ‘on the far side of’. So, for example, the piece of land on the far side of the Romanian forest was called Transylvania (sylvan means woods) and the piece of ancient Gaul that was on the near side of the Alps (relative to Rome) was called Cisalpine Gaul.

Having a word that specifies people who are not trans in a way that does not also imply normalcy or authenticity (as options like ‘regular man’ or ‘bio-woman’ do) works to strip the language of some of its implicit biases and allows more generic terms like ‘man’ and ‘woman’ to be understood as trans inclusive (even if they don’t include everyone in the genderqueer middle of the gender spectrum). I also really appreciate having a way to identify my gender that is true to my experience and also signals my awareness of non-cisgender experience.

shit like pharmaceuticals, computer software and hardware, car insurance and the like. Words that just reek of corporate board rooms. For me, cis had a similar feel.

Well I guess looking at the word without looking it up, it could be “SIS” as in “sis-ter-man,” that doesn’t seem so bad to me. I like the incongruent mixings of that and the disorientating of every day norms. But cis comes out of the mouth something like a

cis. At the very least you would think I could do is troll around on the internet looking for definitions and people’s opinions and insights. But by not going that route there is also a purity of direct experience. I simply encounter people use “cis-men” in a derogatory vein. Usually it’s after a frustrating experience and the cis-man is judged a problem by labeling him as such. I wonder, sometimes, if they know the meaning of the word as they say it. It

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A fundamental question that motivates me to write this is 'what kind of world are radicals making in the process of working to achieve a goal?' A big part of creating new worlds is language, for language informs perception. I think words are great. I like listening to people talk and sing, passionately discuss issues and make indescribable noises. I go to meetings, I dig the collage of noise at cafes, I get mesmerized by radio talk shows as well as underground musicians. I think words hold more value than money. Early on in life while playing in the streets of Berkeley I heard my first slang word — or at least one that wasn't going to be taught in a classroom anytime soon. A kid said something was "lcy," and I had to stop what I was doing and decipher it. It was the early 1980's and I could relate that it had something to do with cool and fresh, except done with more style. lcy wasn't likely to be a banner on some cheaply made product. It lived on the streets.

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word, the way it was used, it reminded me the feeling I had when I first heard "HPV," a word noting a new sexually transmitted disease. In some ways cis resembles HPV, for both words imply something you don't want to catch. Nor does it seem to be something people can get rid of. You are a straight male indoctrinated by capitalism, and you will die that way.

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I most often hear it as "cis white man." The rhythm of that could be a form of casting a spell — the sticking of needles into a doll. But what I'd like to raise is that these are assumptions. Is the person really white...hetero...male? And only that? Did your experience allow you to ask them to define

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FEEDING PEOPLE IN MISSOURI

AN INTERVIEW WITH SPRINGFIELD FOOD NOT BOMBS!



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Interview by Darin

There have been people in Springfield Missouri who have wanted to start a local Food Not Bombs chapter for years and it just never materialized; J. was active at Occupy Oakland and made his way back to the Midwest with his friend C. They have been working to make Springfield FNB happen.

Hey J.!

Howdy! Springfield Food Not Bombs first feeding will be on Sunday! We planned it to be small since we are just starting out. We are making food for about 20 or so people. Tonight we have a meeting for a group of us (very small group) that are looking to start a food not bombs.

How are you getting food and stuff?

That is what we are trying to figure out. Dumpstering is not really an option here. We saw an alternative in Reno, they hit food banks and used that. Then, there are some people who worked with some local health food place and other businesses to get some food

donated for various actions so that is an avenue to check out as well. I am pretty excited [about starting a food not bombs] and C. is even more so. We found some people who have been wanting to do it but never did. It's not Oakland, but we are trying to bring some of that spirit here.

Given the way that feeding people overlaps with the mission of mainstream charities, what do you feel you are accomplishing by organizing a Food Not Bombs? I work with Food Not Bombs in the East Bay and this question comes up often.

Well here the homeless services are pretty limited. There is only one consistent night meal provided here and the place that does it, *The Victory Mission*, requires anyone who wishes to eat to sit through a sermon. If you are late they lock the doors and if you leave during the sermon, you don't eat.

Starve in the name of Jesus, hallelujah!

When I was there the guy in charge told everyone to make sure to use the bathroom

before chapel because if we left for any reason, we couldn't eat.

To me that is absolutely ridiculous; that they will hold the ability to eat over people's heads like that!

Tell me a little more about Springfield?

There is no real anarchist community here. There are a few anarchists that I have met, but they don't really talk about it or do anything because it wouldn't be accepted here. I am hoping that by organizing a Food Not Bombs that we can bring some of these people

Supper not sermons!

together and show them that although we are a minority, especially in this area of the country, we do exist.

What is the population like there?

A couple hundred thousand maybe, it's the biggest city in this part of Missouri. There is a small group of us who want to start handing

out anarchist literature. We are collecting various pamphlets and what-not. We want to start an anarchist community center. They had one here a few years ago but it didn't last very long. We are thinking if we find a building with a room or two we could, as a group, rent the building and the rent for the rooms could help pay for the info-shop. Rent here is pretty cheap, so we may be able to pull it off.

Later that week...

Hey J., How did things go?

Hey! We did the first Food Not Bombs event tonight! Went better than I thought it would. Fed around 40. There were a few who came at the end and we ran out of food. It was interesting because most of the people here weren't familiar with Food Not Bombs and were surprised by the lack of a sermon and more relaxed environment. It was fun. We are going to go over it tomorrow at the meeting and figure out how to make it better and be better prepared.

YOUR SOUL is your LIBRARY CARD

Continued from Page 1

the shelves, still in place over forty years after the building had ceased being a library. The call out to resurrect the library brought more books; one activist estimated that there were well over a thousand books on the shelves, sorted by author and subject—non fiction, fiction, young adult, children's, poetry and Spanish language. Activists suffered under no delusions about the permanency of their act—they realized that at any moment the police could arrive and evict them. They were only a handful for the first hour or two, but the community immediately appreciated the significance of a sudden library in the middle of the neighborhood. The first patron was a sex worker who picked up a romance novel; then a Spanish-speaking resident on his way to work, beaming with joy and surprise.

By noon, kids and families from all over the community were stopping by the new library and picking up books. Books were checked on the honor system and no card was necessary; as one activist put it, "your soul is your library card". The response from the community was overwhelming: "thank you for doing this, please stay". With such an incredible amount of public support for reversing the neglect caused by the city's austerity logic, it was not surprising to face an exaggerated repressive police response. What did surprise activists was its quickness; less than an hour after a rousing inaugural potluck and poetry reading and the ground-breaking of a community garden bottom-lined by the neighborhood's children, police cordoned off four square blocks around the library. Dozens of squad cars descended on the neighborhood; police threatened those inside with arrest and gave them scant time to rescue the books and leave the area.

Activists took the books to safety, and, disheartened, agreed to meet at the library again the next morning and decide how to proceed. No one involved had high hopes. The

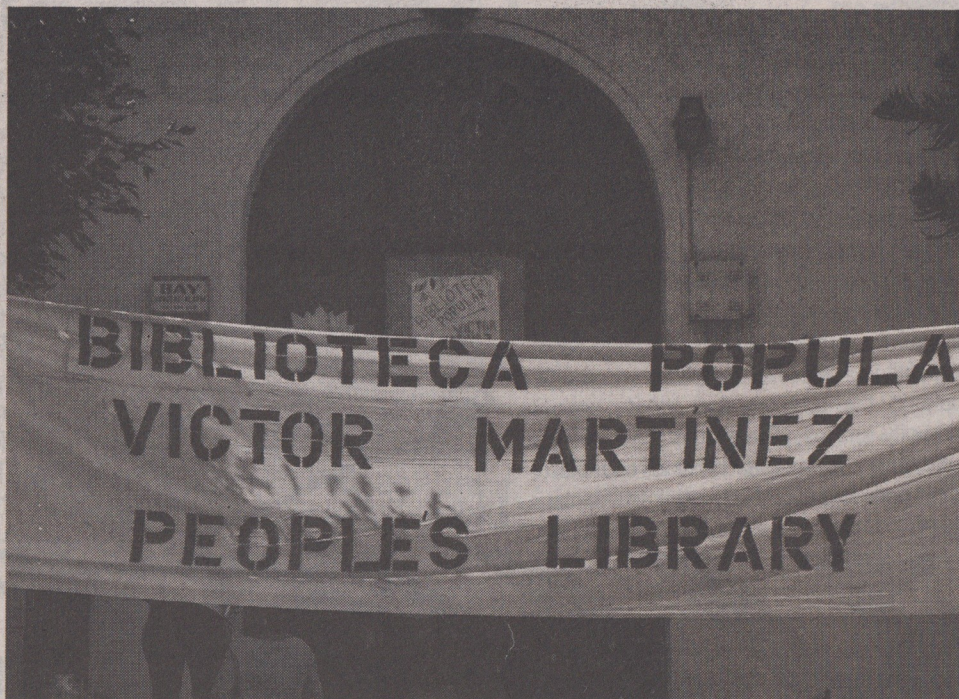
That's because they are easy to understand for even the least politically sophisticated persons: people have the right to control their communities, no matter what city government says; taking property left to rot through willful incompetence and/or greed and repurposing it for communal good is an unimpeachable act; cities are perhaps the worst austerity offenders, directing endless finances at "security" measures through police, while cutting off funding for neighborhood keystone services vital to social health. Most importantly, all sanctioned attempts to end this reign of misuse

berated police on the day after the raid, recounting all the times he had shot heroin and received blow jobs in the building under their nose. He meant this as a bit of sardonic and comic criticism. But that supporter has battled with heroin addiction for the majority of his adult life — some three decades according to his own math. Facing poverty and a lack of options, he's tried to kick the habit with Methadone over the last few years, with a marginal level of success. Biblioteca's most enthusiastic participants are often undocumented; one new bottomliner

Prompted by this sudden and cruel reality check, and the work of recreating the library that would be needed, the activists moved forward with an idea that had been floating around for some time — moving the library into the grounds behind the building along with the community garden. Biblioteca became a self-contained and unique entity, existing on unused city property, ostensibly without permission, and under the control of members of the community. The space weds the healthy food and knowledge base absent from communities like the "Twomps" — the experience of Biblioteca demonstrates that these are the most intensely felt aspirations in the community as residents seek to end their cycle of poverty, violence and decaying infrastructure.

A great challenge has been figuring out how to provide community members the space, sense of security and resources to step up fully and take over what the activists began on the inaugural day of Biblioteca Popular. Regular meetings to discuss the disposition of the library and the building have begun, and while there are many issues to circumvent — including translation and varying levels of political sophistication and vulnerability before the law — community members seem very excited to create a new kind of political and social zone in the Biblioteca.

None of this is easy — the odds of a successful outcome are daunting. But there are heartening signs: police began avoiding the 15th street side of the building where the garden and library were located almost completely. More and more community residents became completely comfortable with enjoying the benefits of a modest library and open green space in their neighborhood, and even undocumented residents who voiced concerns about entering just a few days ago started their first bold forays into the contested



have failed; it must be contested through direct action. Every response to Biblioteca from the community embodied these points.

After the books and garden were transferred to the sidewalk, activists and members of the community focused their attention on the

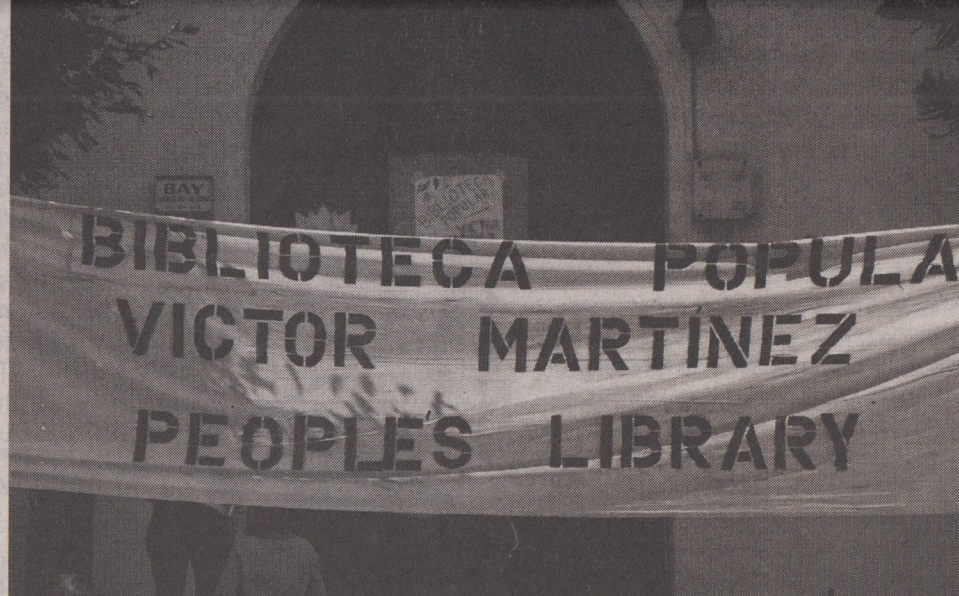
commented that a relative had been recently deported due to a routine brush with the law that would generate no more than an expensive traffic ticket for a legal resident. The dangers are real, and the ambiguous relationship with the police can be a source of

beaming with joy and surprise.

By noon, kids and families from all over the community were stopping by the new library and picking up books. Books were checked on the honor system and no card was necessary; as one activist put it, "your soul is your library card". The response from the community was overwhelming: "thank you for doing this, please stay". With such an incredible amount of public support for reversing the neglect caused by the city's austerity logic, it was not surprising to face an exaggerated repressive police response. What did surprise activists was its quickness; less than an hour after a rousing inaugural potluck and poetry reading and the ground-breaking of a community garden bottom-lined by the neighborhood's children, police cordoned off four square blocks around the library. Dozens of squad cars descended on the neighborhood; police threatened those inside with arrest and gave them scant time to rescue the books and leave the area.

Activists took the books to safety, and, disheartened, agreed to meet at the library again the next morning and decide how to proceed. No one involved had high hopes. The dejected group sat in front of the newly secured space—the front door blocked with plywood, the gate awkwardly fastened with hard plastic zip ties—but couldn't decide what to do. The kids who had set up the first garden-beds showed up, asking if they would be able to finish their work. Somewhat bolstered, the group decided to bring the books back and arrange them in front of the fence. By afternoon, a sidewalk iteration of the library was open, and the banner had been transferred to the fence. The new stacks looked oddly triumphant and unbowed in their ad-hoc milk crate bookshelves. Biblioteca Popular Victor Martinez was back, after only a brief pause in its newborn life.

The community seemed more engaged at this point, not less. There was a great deal of anger against the police reaction, not surprisingly—residents roundly denounced the response, given the awful impact of the decrepitude of the building and its new, empowering incarnation as an aggregator of community. More books were brought out by members of the community. Another potluck was held; one member of the community, a master chef, undocumented immigrant and

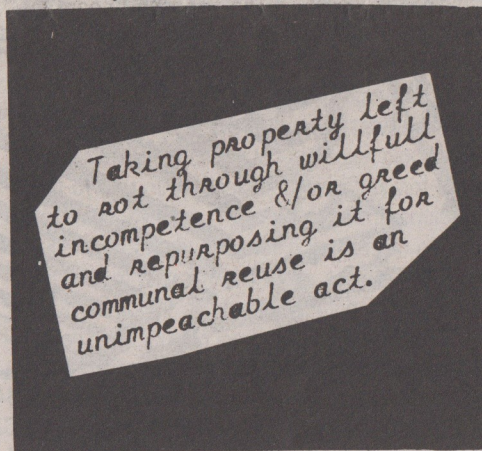


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After the books and garden were transferred to the sidewalk, activists and members of the community focused their attention on the nascent garden bed that had been started by kids from the neighborhood on Biblioteca's first day, entering the grounds to fill it, despite admonitions from police that trespassing charges could result. The first bed was laid with donated soil, compost and starts, then another was built and filled, then another. Homemade compost bins were added, and some benches were made from discarded lumber found in the neighborhood; there is no shortage of police for stopping the positive use of forgotten property, but dumping of all kinds continued right in front of parked police cars throughout the last weeks. For once, that waste goes towards enriching the neighborhood, not cluttering it.

This is where the rubber met the road for Biblioteca activists. The neighborhood called "murder dubs" didn't get its name by accident; incidents of violence are high, the neighborhood faced police invasions in the days after the raid as a consequence of shootings and armed burglaries. Moreover, the area is ground zero for International Boulevard's notorious sex trade, where a small army of young and very often teen women march day and night under a feudal patriarchal

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The kids who've adopted the building and grounds as their own also face a sobering environment; they live with the constant threat of their parents disappearing into the legal system and facing deportation, sometimes unhealthy and violent home environments, and the call of attractive solutions to tough problems embodied by prostitution, violence and drug use. More than one of the parents of the kids who are responsible for helping to create the community garden are "paleteros" — selling popsicles for lack of better options. They

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None of this is easy — the odds of a successful outcome are daunting. But there are heartening signs: police began avoiding the 15th street side of the building where the garden and library were located almost completely. More and more community residents became completely comfortable with enjoying the benefits of a modest library and open green space in their neighborhood, and even undocumented residents who voiced concerns about entering just a few days ago started their first bold forays into the contested space. The community's natural, if not always recognized leaders, have become increasingly involved, not just in "helping", but in directing the future of the space, including a campaign directed at eventually opening the building.

Just when the library was on a steady course to become a self-sufficient community aggregator, police arrived again on August 28 to patch the holes in the fence. They had no further orders, however, and the library on the other side of the fence remained intact. The action had a different effect than the one intended by the district's city council member Ignacio de la Fuente, who most likely ordered the police response. Several neighborhood residents who came to use the library and found its entrance closed were incensed. They went out to organize the community to come to the meeting at 5:30pm that day that had already been scheduled. In one of the most organic congregations of community that I've witnessed, about a dozen or so parents came out with their children to talk about the next steps; not only in re-securing the space they were coming to depend on, but to re-open the building as a library and/or community center. Most of the participants were low-income

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Mainstream media, normally addicted to negative stories about occupations, covered the story both honestly and sympathetically. A City of Oakland library administrator and candidate for the district seat even visited, giving their kudos. Despite this wide-spread mainstream support, the radical politics of the action have always been front and center.

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regime as toxic as any that mainstream capitalism can produce. Some of Biblioteca's biggest supporters are ex-convicts, and more than one is a former occupant of the halfway house across the street. One of them, in fact,

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There are also logistical challenges. By the end of the second week, activists and community members were facing some predictable stumbling blocks. Books can endure only so long unprotected from the elements. And the elements are not the only enemies facing the milk crate sidewalk library — a 24/7 watch by activists was running on fumes by the end of the first week and exhausted activists faced the reality that the books would be vulnerable to vandalism and large-scale theft from local entrepreneurs or official efforts to eliminate this on-going referendum on city government's uselessness. Indeed, shortly after activists made the decision to conserve energy for other efforts and cease the night vigils, someone vandalized the library, destroying crates and books, flinging them into the street and over the fence and tearing the eponymous banner in half. Hours of very careful and detailed sorting and categorizing were undone in moments.

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As this article goes to press, participants have agreed to keep the library going on the sidewalk on the 15th street side again, during after school hours, until the grounds are secured again for community use. No matter what happens, Biblioteca lights the way for a new form of activism, where Occupy tactics reshape community organizing and open up the potential for creating organically self-radicalizing communities.

*This article adapted from the author's blog:
hyphenatedrepublic.wordpress.com*

These publications are often made on a tight budget and a small run. By all means contact them to receive their goods but be cautious of a couple items. Not all publications will send a free copy to prisoners. You all are the most persistent of Slingshot readers who actually write people. Most of the responses come from you, so thanks. Don't expect them to give you a publication for nothing. Consider offering to contribute content in exchange for their work. Ask what they would like you to give — words, art, news — and send it to them. Also if you are reading this a year or so after the Slingshot's print date, send a letter of inquiry before you send money, to make sure they're still there.

Reviews by robert eggplant

Muchacha #3 \$1

muchachafanzine.tumblr.com

A mermaid adorns the cover with an ocean of ideas inside. Like a coral reef, there's several pages of busy action to fill the eyes with complex collages, essays on current events, quotes, lists of cool bands, inspired lyrics destroying American Idol, historical sketches of activists, and manifestos. There are a few hands in the works, but the guiding force is one person focused on feminism and her family's roots with Mexico. She started this zine as an endeavor to help represent a new movement called Feminism Is Not Dead (F.I.N.D.), Riot Grrrl being a major influence. This is an ideal publication to absorb during long waits at the DMV, while train-hopping, or during a life of working for real political change.



PEOPS #7

PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn. NYC, NY 10276
fly@peops.org

A gallery of outcasts and rebels with brief candid biographies. Or maybe you can consider it as trading cards of feral creatures with face tattoos, dreads, exotic piercings; musicians of acquired tastes, and squat puppies. This has been a staple of underground art for close to 20 years now and I am used to being bored by its familiar art and narratives. But once I set myself down to really look at these people I find that this work really animates the subjects and makes them seem thoughtful and likeable. This issue covers 35 people in the arts, on the streets and in community spaces. The stories these Peops tell create a subway map of sorts, capable of guiding both locals and tourists into the thick wilds of underground culture.

AB #13 May 2012 (2 for \$2)

c/o Lisa Ahne Po Box 181 Alsea, OR 97324

Every inch of page space is maximized here which is not unusual for the obsessive compulsive nature of many zines — but in this case it represents the writers' approach to living off the grid, frugally and in transit. This is made by the same people who do Dwelling Portably, which covers similar territory. The 16pgs of AB mostly act as a message board where various people give short bursts of advice and insights to alternative living in all sorts of places (Arizona, Eastern Washington, on a boat off the coast of Florida). The mosaic of voices is made more mysterious at times by the coded language and descriptions to strange projects. People acclimated to tweeter speak will feel at home as well as the seasoned pros in "How to Live Better for Less." The general tone is not complacent with today's consumer culture, and most of the people have genuine hope in seeing a world from a different angle. Before we had the internet, there were many publications that provided this kind of service — I say it's still needed.



No Fascism in the New Wave \$5

c/o Goteblud 776 Valencia St. SF, CA 94110

This is put together by a radical media savvy proprietor of a store that deals with antique zines. This is a zine of clippings from rare publications put out in the late 70's and early 80's. The content looks at the then burgeoning punk scene and how it affected women, queers and people of color. It's strange how studying history often reveals current events...a rising right wing, crashing economy, and a new music being made that defies categories. This makes studying history more like studying a mirror.

NO FASCISM IN THE NEW WAVE

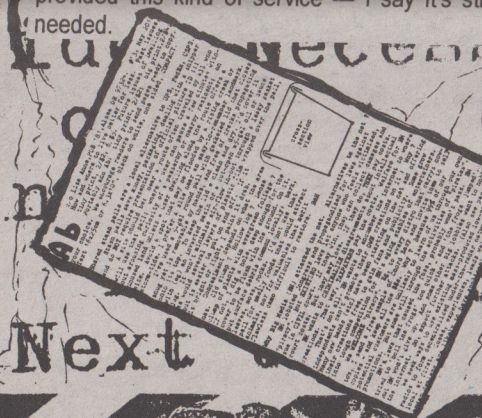
Bitch King #3,4,5
madame.angela.chaos@gmail.com

This is the work of people running and hanging out at the Blood Orange Info Shop in Southern Ca. There is urgency to the writing as it uses a plain and direct language. Resistance is a major topic as well as the meaning of being queer in an oppressive environment. Issue #5 is quarter size with manifesto type content throughout it. There's poetry in #3&4 that has some revolutionary sentiments — but also some eros-oriented words. The art seems mostly taken from kid's books, giving it a feeling that it was quickly thrown together. Though this might not sell to some people, have in mind quickly thrown together zines usually respond faster to current events.



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PIPE BOMB
Pipe Bomb #43
228 E. Clayton St. Athens, GA 30601
zinepipebomb@gmail.com

Brave crude comics fill the pages with various atrocities and fantasized nightmares. Images of punks, zombies, and body fluids all strung together with home cooked nursery rhymes. It's all drawn by hand with varying levels of skill and time commitment. This zine has come a long way to remain straight forward and consistently be a labor of fun. I get the impression the editor has a hundred notebooks

AVOW #24 \$3

c/o Keith Rosson 1725 E. Linnwood
Milwaukee, WI 53211 keithrosson.com

This is a sharp looking thing. It has the characteristics of where Cometbus left off in the late 90's. The editor seems to be a DIY design nerd, given that his layouts could make people drool. He also fills the space with his unique style of writings and comics. The writing has a lot of personal introspection seeping from the pages. A record review will turn into an autobiographical flashback. This was made at a time of great change for the writer, and he sat with the content awhile before sharing it with us. The death of his father, moving, finding work, and quitting

The Radvocate \$2
3425 University Ave. Ste. 1430 San Diego,
CA 92104

A free-for-all literary journal. This issue has 8 authors and 5 artists contributing to the delinquency of your mind. The randomness creates a hodge-podge of voices and approaches. The pages have an article on the scandal of a sports coach covering up child molestation. A travel story of skater kids going to Switzerland and being assholes. There's also poetry, and other impressionistic writings that fill the pages. The writers are not particularly radical, but rebel in their own way. As one of them writes, "I believe rules should be challenged from now and then. Preferably now." This zine seems so open it looks like you

Arming The Stripper
dkordani@gmail.com

I love zines for moments like when the page has a bit of wisdom that blatantly strays from the established narrative of the rest of the pages. In this case there is a nicely decorated message stating, "Burning cop cars are a girl's best friend" just hanging out in the layout. A quarter size multi-colored wonder that opens a window to the world of Por(n)tland's Smut Industrial Complex. The scenes behind the sexy dance aren't pretty. Unpleasant and boring moments bring out the real characters that populate the sleazy dives. The oddball customers, club owners, and the workers struggling in a shitty low wage existence are accounted for with the damages they make on



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Fluke #10

PO Box 24957 Tempe, AZ 85285

A music publication made on offset so it looks really fancy. They cover the punk scenes of the Bay Area and Arkansas. This issue is mostly interviews — the 2nd time in its 20 years of publishing. The majority of the interviews are conducted at exciting events so are pretty thin content wise. The value with this kind of dialog is in reading people's quick-witted attitudes. A couple of the other interviews are from quieter environments but over all these people don't seem to catch me. The conversations often look at punk rock and how it changed their lives, but I'm not sure if I'm into their definition of punk. Most of what they have to say isn't too interesting, which is sad since so much effort went to making this.

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Degenerate #10 \$2

PO Box 3272 Berkeley, CA 94703

degeneratezine@gmail.com

A music zine that takes a chance with its approach. This issue contemplates, "Each man must kill the thing he loves," and uses that idea to look at the deadening process of putting your ideas into records and zines. An interview with Meredith Graves of the band Shoppers consists of her analyzing the editor's dream and doing word associations. There's also reviews that are thoughtfully written and weird clip art. This is made by a shit worker of Maximum Rock n' Roll and in some ways exhibits what's missing from that established monthly.

peak; "com

The Radvocate \$2

3425 University Ave. Ste. 1430 San Diego, CA 92104

A free-for-all literary journal. This issue has 8 authors and 5 artists contributing to the delinquency of your mind. The randomness creates a hodge-podge of voices and approaches. The pages have an article on the scandal of a sports coach covering up child molestation. A travel story of skater kids going to Switzerland and being assholes. There's also poetry, and other impressionistic writings that fill the pages. The writers are not particularly radical, but rebel in their own way. As one of them writes, "I believe rules should be challenged from now and then. Preferably now." This zine seems so open it looks like you could be in the next issue.

High On Burning Photographs #8

c/o Ocean Capewell PO Box 40144
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

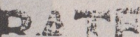
escape_well@yahoo.com

The introduction says this issue aims to help people in the current hard times. The whole zine gives a first person account of recovering from emotional devastation. A really honest opening up that peers into issues of broken relationships, abuse, and friendships. There's a radical perspective guiding everything but one that doesn't rely on canned slogans to answer to the issues. Instead the writer endeavors to understand the situation. The writing is enjoyable and doesn't gloss over things, which tends to happen with personal zines. The introspection of a failed love even makes its way into a vignette/report of the Occupy Pittsburgh PA camp. This person also does a zine on carpal tunnel tendonitis and how to treat it.

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dkordani@gmail.com

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Zine In Progress (ZIP) #2 \$7(trade of comparable worth) zine.noisebridge.net/zip
PO Box 420051 SF CA 94142-0051

A space will inform what kind of work is made there. Check out the Noisebridge hacker space in SF; a fucking mind blowing endeavor to make you happy for revolution. This publication just bursts with active minds engaged with computers, potty humor and an impressive display of intelligence. Each page is intensely alive whether it is an interview with a Noisebridge regular or a page of goofing off. Of course, all the content is also available online.

A-ZONE *of our own*

By Alex

(Dis) Connection was "a networking journal for radical collectives and infoshops." The second issue was written by Chicagoans, and was largely about the Autonomous Zone Infoshop, a collectively run space that operated in the northwest side of Chicago for over ten years in five of its own storefronts and in the back room of another Collective's space. The words "Left Bank donated \$50.00 to assist in our goal of one Uzi per A-Zone member" on the inside cover of the November '94 issue instantly sparked my interest. Left Bank Books

copies and save money on shipping and share the printing costs are just two of the reasons why we can have a similar project now that could go really well. I would like to use a similar format where cities take turns publishing issues to share about the trials and tribulations in the Anti-State of their local movements, without airing too much dirty laundry. Maybe we can have a list serve for that! I would also greatly appreciate input from people who were involved with (Dis) Connection. Articles in the second issue such as "Against Half-Assed Race and Class

edition of the project, or a new one. In an era of so-called "social networking" websites, these journals were a real challenge to get a hold of, and I'm sure I would have read them repeatedly if they were new, and that they would have spurred even more discussions than these old issues have recently.

It was also fascinating to see Food Not Bombs in Chicago declared dead forever. There were three different neighborhood chapters going strong when I was reading the journal years later! The death of the Earth First! Movement was also pondered in this

Forwards → a → new → radical → networking → Journal

is a Collectively run, Leftist bookstore in Seattle which has been going since 1973. Successive issues were done in turn by the various cities that had collectives that were part of the project. The other Collectives were also Infoshop/radical community space Collectives that were maintaining storefronts, and thus shared common concerns about interpersonal relationships, gentrification, if paying rent to keep a space going made sense, and what not. I'd only discovered this journal when my comrade, ex-A-Zoner Rachel A., lent me two copies to help with my research for the A-Zone Essay Project. Networking with a radical organization that has been able to keep going for so long is a great opportunity, and journals are a great way to do so for people who can't make a trip to Seattle or whatever other cities have been able to maintain such long term spaces such as May Day Books, which has been going since

Theory and Practice" by Ken Wong, "Gentrifuckation and White Frontier Collectives" and "On Boys In Collectives" were somewhat painful reminders about how many current Leftist activists in general, and participants in the Infoshop Movement in particular are pretty good at re-inventing faulty wheels. Bringing back these past discussions and insights is a large part of the point of that project.

When asked to be on a panel about "Zines & Libraries" at Chicago 'Zine Fest in 2010 when I was doing the research, I made a point in inviting Ken Wong and bringing the two copies of (Dis) Connection with me, and talking about how Wicker Park was still 70% Latin@ at the time the A-Zone was there according to the journal. I brought this up while talking about the current gentrification of Pilsen, for anyone there who still might not be taking it seriously.

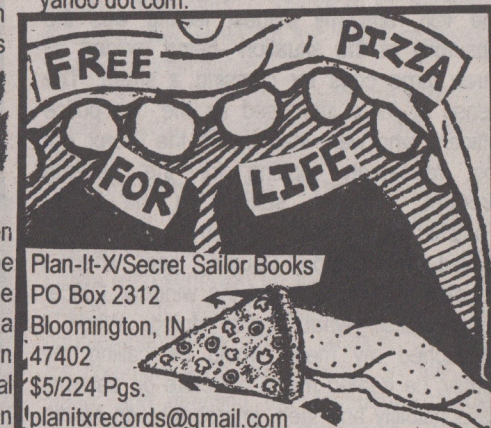
1990s journal, showing how we can often despair when there still is hope. The networking that came formally out of the journal culminated in Active Resistance, a series of events that were held in Chicago in opposition to the Democratic National Convention that met there in 1996. We had an Active Resistance banner hanging on the wall in the main room of the Bucktown space the whole time I was in the Collective, and the events were the stuff of local legend to me.

I had started the A-Zone Essay Project while volunteering for a space in El Barrio Pilsen, Chicago which had opened to the public as the Sowing Circle in the fall of 2008, and slowly changed to the Lichen Lending Library then La Biblioteca Popular del Barrio by the fall of 2009. I mentioned the A-Zone a great deal in meetings there, and was asked many questions which gave me the idea to put some of the history and lessons learned into print for

Center, the Long Haul Infoshop, and the Taala Hooghan Infoshop. I've made a point of making the 'zine available for free on zinelibrary.info where it can be read online easily or printed out.

Right now I'm mostly involved with the Taala Hooghan Infoshop in Flagstaff, Arizona, and the Collective is currently updating their 2010 DISORIENTATION GUIDE for students, which they've made available for free on their website, another great format which I first became familiar with while hanging around the Madison Infoshop in Wisconsin. There has been talk about making a state-wide Disorientation Guide for some time, and after I wrote the first draft of this article, there has been some talk here of making the it the first issue of this journal!

If you are interested in supporting this project, I can be reached at alextheweaver at yahoo dot com.



This book from Chris Clavin of Plan-It-X chronicles at least a decade of the author's life along with stories of other important people in his life like Sam/Samantha Dorsett who started the label and so much more (Sam had transitioned to become Samantha during their life). It felt very honest and open and had many intense moments for me because I had similar experiences with pop-punk, soda, eating pizza and trying to find spaces for myself where I could connect to people in a real way. The letters are a nice touch and really made me appreciate the very hands-on approach that Clavin talks about in the book. This book for

the words "Left Bank donated \$50.00 to assist in our goal of one Uzi per A-Zone member" on the inside cover of the November '94 issue instantly sparked my interest. Left Bank Books

that I would also greatly appreciate input from people who were involved with (Dis) Connection. Articles in the second issue such as "Against Half-Assed Race and Class

First! Movement was also pondered in this

forwards → a → new → radical → networking → Journal

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I would Love to help try to organize a New Connections journal for Punk and/or Collective Houses, Infoshops, and other radical spaces and projects. The fact that we can use the Internet to easily distribute the journal, and allow various Collectives and independent organizers to print an appropriate number of

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In the other issue of the journal I was able to check out, #3, Winter 95, one particular article stood out to me, "A-ZONE!? WHAT THE fuck!?" The article is mostly an analysis of the discussion and its follow up, and a larger one was produced as a pamphlet, Existentialist Blues. I would Love to see a copy, and possibly include it as an appendix to a future

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Plan-It-X/Secret Sailor Books
PO Box 2312
Bloomington, IN
47402
\$5/224 Pgs.
planitxrecords@gmail.com

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Review by jonathan

infoshop update 2

Compiled by Jesse D. Palmer

Social networking can't just happen on-line — people everywhere yearn to create face-to-face communities in the real world. Against all odds, thousands of people scattered hither and yon are creating community spaces, DIY bike shops, and bookstores to host shows, discussions, meetings, and the personal interactions that keep us human. Here are some radical spaces we heard about too late to include in the 2013 Slingshot organizer, plus some corrections. Check them out. Let us

The Seed – Lancaster, Pennsylvania
A worker-owned vegetarian cafe and community space. 52 N. Queen Street Lancaster, PA 17603 theseedlanaster.com theseedlanaster@gmail.com 717-945-5787

Shades of Afrika – Long Beach, CA
An Afrikan-centered book & art store and cultural center that hosts events and study groups. 1001 East 4th St. Long Beach, CA 90802 562-436-2210 www.shadesofafrika.com

Bike Forth – Davis, CA

Rusty Spoke Bicycle Collective – Phoenix, AZ

A volunteer-run DIY bike shop and community space that provides bicycle work space and tools, recycles bikes, and hosts events. They have a women/trans workshop weekly. 1023 Grand Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85007 www.rustyspoke.org (Entrance is through the alley between Taylor and Fillmore).

The Roosevelt 2.0 – Tampa, FL

A community space that hosts music, art and

Changes to the 2013 Organizer

As soon as we took the organizer to the printing press, many people started emailing us corrections and updates that were too late. Please hand write these in your organizer...

- The Community Center Coalition in Lancaster, PA is closed.
- A lot of projects operate out of the 27 Social Center in Denver. We didn't list all the names
- The Bellingham Alternative Library moved after we went to press so the address published in the organizer is wrong. They are now at 306 Flora St. Bellingham, WA 98225.
- The Minnehaha Free Space moved after we went to press. Their new address is 3747

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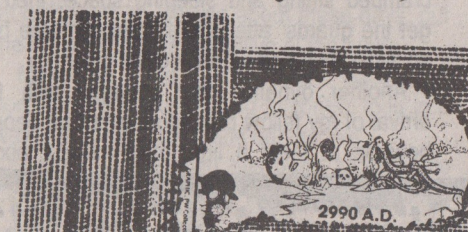
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Centro Social CCC – San Juan, Puerto Rico

A social center with a library and zines that hosts events. 1657 Ave. Fernández Juncos, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00909 infoshopsanturce.wordpress.com

Owl Farm – Nashville, TN

A new show and meeting space with a music, book and zine shop. 811 Dickerson Pike Unit I, Nashville, TN 37207

Hazardous Materials Zine Shop – Richmond, VA

A zine shop with books, posters, patches and a writing workspace that hosts workshops on zine making and writing. Open Thur – Mon 1-6 pm. 1806 Currie St. Richmond, VA 23220 hazardousmaterialsrvva.wordpress.com

Portland Button Works – PDX, OR

A zine and button shop and mail order where you can make your own buttons. 1322 N Killingsworth St., Portland, OR 97217 503-922-2684 portlandbuttonworks.com

Noisebridge – San Francisco, CA

An educational hackerspace that provides tech resources and meeting/event space. 2169 Mission St. San Francisco, CA 94103 415-738-2341 www.noisebridge.net

Rag and Bones Bicycle Cooperative – Richmond, VA

A volunteer-run bike cooperative that rebuilds bikes and provides tools, shop space, parts and info to help people learn to fix their own bikes. 1320 School St. Bay 2, Richmond, VA 23220, ragandbonesrvva.wordpress.com

Acrata – Bruxelles, Belgium

A radical lending library with an archive and bookshop offering zines and books in English, French and Flemish about regional issues. They host a monthly vegetarian BBQ in the street. Highly recommended. 32 Rue de la Grande île 1000 Brussels, Belgium www.acrata.be, acrata@post.com

The Tempest – Berlin, Germany

A multilingual radical library that has a lot of info about European radical activity and hosts events. Open Tue/Thu 4-8 and Fri/Sun 2-6. Reichenbergerstr. 63a 10999 Berlin, Germany tempestlibrary.com

On-line Resource

Neil wrote us to say that since 2007 he has maintained an international database of DIY and radical spaces at dodiy.org. Check it out.

- We didn't include the Grease Pit Community Bike Shop because we didn't know they had a new address. They are now at 2750 Bloomington Ave. Minneapolis, MN 55407 greasepittbikes.com
- We didn't list the Edmonton Small Press Association because they were between locations. Their new address is: 11336 101 St. Edmonton, AB T5G 2A7 Canada. Their phone number and PO box remain the same: 780-434-9236, P.O. Box 95086 (Whyte RPO - 8065 104 St.) Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4E3
- We listed the address to Barricade Books in Melbourne Australia but they have since been evicted and are looking for a new location.
- The Farside in Tallahassee, FL has closed.

FROM SIDEWALK TO SLAMMER!

Continued from Page 1

me and shouted, "It's over." Another voice: "Just take it easy." Someone else said, "Put your hands behind your back." I recovered my glasses with some trepidation, announcing that I was doing so. The comment "it's over" struck me as humorous. I wondered what "it" referred to. The march certainly. "You've got me in the wrong movie," I wanted to say.

As I was handcuffed and placed in a van, people from the march asked for my name. After calling it out, I nodded towards Benin to indicate he would give folks my information. A man yelled, "We love you, Rory!" Soon I was in the van, and my biggest feeling was the absurdity of the situation—being tackled by three large cops for crossing a street. The sense of farce increased as the two police officers, who were stationed in the Bronx, got lost repeatedly looking for the seventh precinct, a police station on the Lower Eastside. Benin trailed the van for a while as it circled Washington Square, and when I scooted over to look out the window, Officer Antwi asked what I was doing. When I mentioned my friend would be calling my family, he treated me to a lecture on paternal responsibility and then, improbably, on Martin Luther King: "You're not following the King route. You're going the Malcolm X route. You're engaging in violence." When I responded that I didn't see how I committed any violence, he clarified: "You didn't listen. You didn't follow directions."

The seventh precinct looked like a cross between an upstate pizza parlor and a strip mall office in the Midwest, maybe a tax return outfit. As I was checked in, Antwi said I would probably receive a Desk Appearance Ticket, which would let me leave the precinct in a couple of hours without going to central

back-and-forth with Sarge, who is still down the hall. He explains he really wants his DAT so he make it to an Occupy after-party.

Jack, 57, was arrested on December 17, along with several clergy members, after attempting to occupy an abandoned lot owned by Trinity Church. Jack is HIV positive and has been on a hunger and medication strike for three weeks to draw attention to the issues surrounding his arrest.

Mark, late 20s, hipster, complete with coke bottle glasses. People ask if he is with the

transferred. They started applauding. Throughout the whole process I was very aware of Occupy's support as well as the help of the National Lawyer's Guild, which offers pro bono representation to people arrested while protesting. Knowing they had my back made the whole process much easier.

Three officers drove me in a squad car to the Tombs. After learning that I was a fellow New York City employee, they became oddly jocular with me as they racked up overtime on my behalf. Upon arrival at the jail, Officer Best decided to show his sense of humor, perhaps

demographic mixture of the movement. I would guess most Occupy marches in the city are about 90% white. The over-representation of black and Latino protesters in jail indicated more targeting by police—a targeting which parallels the day-to-day policing of New York streets, the biases of which were on full display in the cell in the Tombs. To the Raconteur, I mumbled a few things about Occupy turning out for the Trayvon Martin protests and anti-Stop and Frisk marches. But I began to sink into myself, practicing an abstracted stare, which came surprisingly natural. In fact, the Raconteur's last taunt was "Man this dude is too cool—doesn't he know we're monsters in here?"

I still had Jack's warning about violence ringing in my head, and while I was never exactly scared I was definitely uncomfortable. But fairly soon I came to realize there was nothing threatening about my cellmates. Before long people were embarrassedly recounting the trifles they were there for. The trivial nature of the offenses was astounding: things that white or rich people would have walked away from with a ticket at most. The offenses included riding a bike on the sidewalk, riding a bike against traffic, peeing in public, transporting fireworks, a lot of smoking a joint, and one case of dealing pot. One man in my cell had been out on bail awaiting trial for armed robbery, but now he had been arrested for possessing pot. He expressed scorn for the detectives who wasted their time on him.

The Raconteur and an older man named Taylor started talking about Harlem. When asked what part of Harlem he lived in, the Raconteur replied "All of it!" Taylor mentioned that he lived on 140th and 8th Ave, at which point I emerged from my abstraction to say I had been teaching a couple of blocks away



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I sit alone in a cell at the back of the station for about an hour, when I hear a female voice in front singing the Sesame Street song. She is referred to as "Sarge," so I think, "could this actually be a police officer?" She is placed in the other cell, out of my vision. About ten more male protesters and one woman are brought in, mostly in their twenties and early-thirties. They include:

Jorge, 26, born in Mexico, grew up in Texas; at one point in the evening, he references Guy

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Around 6:00am a corrections officer read off names for morning court appearances, and six of my cellmates joined about twenty other prisoners in chain gangs going upstairs. Thirty minutes later, two more protesters arrived in



protest, and he gives the universal gesture for smoking pot. Learning of our situation, he frustrates several protestors by good-naturedly insisting that "Occupy" is a brand and that parodies cannot separate themselves from the media they criticize. I later learn he is an art critic and an archivist at the School of Visual Arts.

In general, I found the hours sharing a cell with ten other protesters challenging. There was a lot of anger and some taunting police,

in revenge for the protesters' gags about his tattoo. Waiting for an elevator to take us inside, I watched as the police emptied the bullets from their guns. "Don't worry," Best deadpanned. "This isn't the execution wall. That comes later."

The Tombs lived up to its Gothic name. I was taken down several flights of concrete stairs and was led through winding, empty passages. There was a lot of standing around at checkpoints. I had a retinal scan and another set of mug shots taken. I also had a

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Following a conversation about how the arrests are meant to intimidate he said, "Not to offend, but are *you* intimidated?"

Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*, though both he and I have trouble explaining it.

Tom, 20, who lives with his parents in Westchester and is still facing more serious charges from May Day. He is very angry to have been charged with resisting arrest: "It was the first time I didn't resist!"

Joel, 19, does a lot of push-ups and explains how people think he's an undercover cop because of his style and penchant for Oakley sunglasses.

A man in a dress shirt and shoes who immediately starts meditating. He avoids eye contact, and when someone says something to him he puts his finger to his mouth.

Julian, an anti-globalization veteran of the last 10 years.

A 20-year-old Goth kid who sings duets

which mostly felt counterproductive, although I did chuckle at cracks about Officer Best's cheesy forearm tattoo. Occasionally, heated arguments broke out, including over whether someone who got pretty beat up should ask for medical attention or whether he should forego it to expedite his release.

At 1:30 a.m. I was told that because I had an out of state driver's license, I would have to go through processing at Central Booking, New York City's downtown jail which is known ubiquitously as "the Tombs." Jack got angry on my behalf, but he also freaked me out by making the experience sound worse than it would turn out to be: "It's a nightmare. You can be in with murderers!" Julian, the anti-globalization veteran, tried to reassure: "It's not so bad. You'll find a corner and go to sleep. You probably don't want to talk to people, but talking to people in jail is not such a good idea anyway." Jack: "You can't sleep—people will beat you up!" Julian continued to be mentoring, detailing how a trip to Central Booking should last about a day but might stretch into a second. Earlier he taught me an old jailhouse trick where you lay down on the concrete floor, mentioning that a shoe makes a pretty good pillow, which it does.

There were about a dozen protesters waiting outside the jail when I came out to be

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The Tombs lived up to its Gothic name. I was taken down several flights of concrete stairs and was led through winding, empty passages. There was a lot of standing around at checkpoints. I had a retinal scan and another set of mug shots taken. I also had a perfunctory interview with an EMT: I stood at the top of a flight of stairs while he sat twenty feet away, behind a desk, while a zombie show unspooled on a small TV. Following advice from my comrades at the seventh, I decided not to mention my swollen knee.

I got to my cell around 4:00am. In it, 14 men were sprawled out, 13 Black guys and a Latino, lots of people my age, in their mid-to-late 30s and 40s. I sat down next to Will, a guy in sunglasses. Upon finding out I was in for protesting he mentioned he spent a couple of days at Zuccotti, but couldn't handle sleeping outside. The dominant personality in the cell was the Raconteur, who told a series of fantastic tales (snowboarding off a cliff in Tahoe, being with three naked girls from

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Around 6:00am a corrections officer read off names for morning court appearances, and six of my cellmates joined about twenty other prisoners in chain gangs going upstairs. Thirty minutes later, two more protesters arrived in my cell, Tom, the kid who "didn't resist arrest this time" and the hunger-striker Jack, whom I happily greeted. Other cellmates began to join our conversation about the protests and police violence. It quickly became evident why jail can be a powerful space for consciousness-raising: you have shared conditions, a common enemy, and ready examples of how the system works. There was a lot of cooperation too. People shared food and legal advice (some of it dubious), negotiated cramped sitting and sleeping space, tried to get the guards' attention if someone else had an issue, and helped each other clean up.

Another dynamic that changed with the arrival of my fellow protesters was that people became at least a little more careful about

Several times, anger washed over me at the time the police were stealing. I imagined my daughter upset in the morning when I wasn't there.

Dallas but being too stoned to make the most of it). Unfortunately, the Raconteur decided to take me into his act: "Those are expensive shoes; he's got some money at home"; "He looks like Bernie Goetz"; "his hoodie is Nike too; I always know when people have money." He also made a few comments about the protests being for whites only.

While this idea about New York Occupy is not really fair, certainly not in terms of its aspirations, it has a grain of truth. My cellmates at the seventh (eight of twelve were white) did not really approximate the

using homophobic and sexist language (in general the amount I heard the phrase "faggots," along with "bitches" and "cunts," was upsetting and somewhat disorienting for me). But people were largely caring and polite with Jack as an out older gay man. I never heard slurs directed towards him and on at least two occasions someone apologized for saying faggot—"you know how I mean it." Jack would just shrug his shoulders and smile sadly.

There was a free phone in the cell, and I called my wife a couple of times. Overhearing other prisoners' conversations was a window

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A New York Teacher Gets A Cheap Education

onto how the damage of arrest spills outward. The man up for armed robbery, which carries seven-to-fifteen years in prison, yelled at a significant other over the phone about the triviality of the new offense. When Tom called home, his father kicked him out after hearing he had been arrested again while awaiting

of prisons spread out before my imagination, each designed to humiliate, stigmatize, separate, isolate. I said, "How does one fight against that, let alone transform it?" Jack said, "this whole thing has to be torn down." I said, "I know, but the question is how." Jack said, "you have to keep fighting; tell all your friends about

shrugged. "This way, I know it ends here." His Legal Aid reported back that the prosecutor's offer was three months in jail. I felt angry for him, but he was stoic and ironic. He explained that he had a decade-old felony conviction for selling marijuana. He was glad the prosecutor didn't ask for six months.

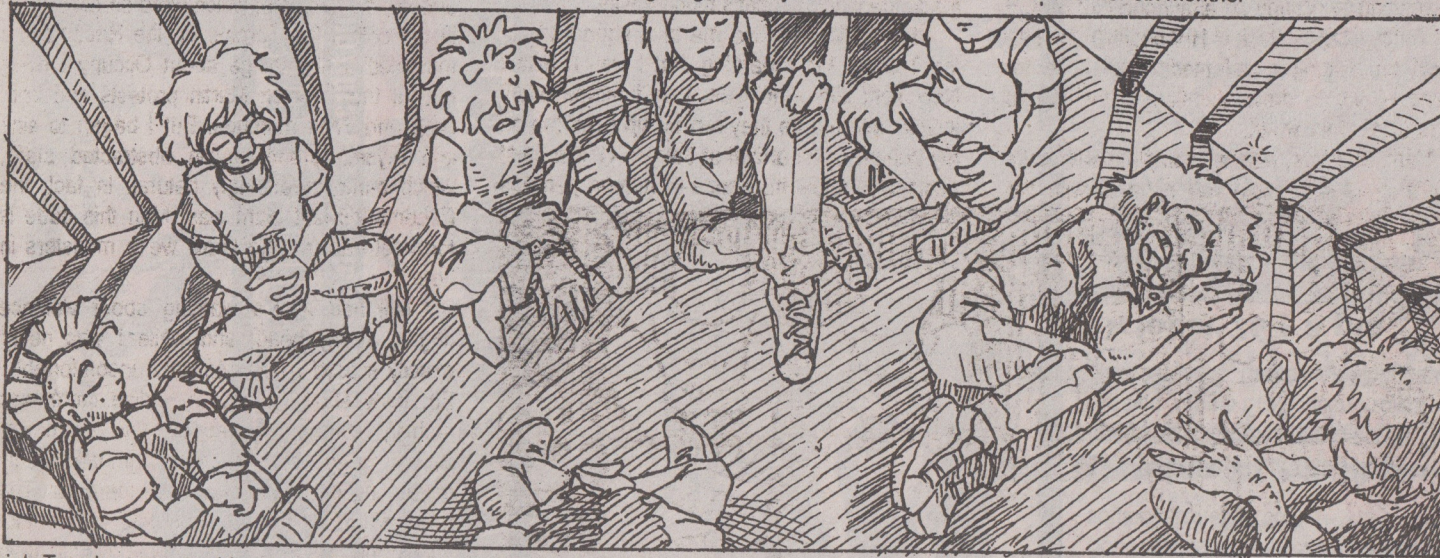
separated our bench from the rest of the court, prisoners had scratched notes from the Tombs, reminders of what structure this space sits above, what it depends upon and reinforces.

I waited for fifteen minutes in court, and then copping my plea took 45 seconds of the judge's time. Outside the courthouse a support person from the NLG checked in about how my case was resolved and five or six people from Occupy doing jail solidarity offered me snacks. A medic in the group looked briefly at my knee, told me to ice it, and offered a cigarette, which I declined.

Getting home just in time for dinner, I was very happy to soak up the last rhythms of the day. But as we were eating Chinese take-out with my in-laws, who were celebrating their anniversary, I mentioned how I felt a wave of survivor's guilt, mostly for the poor souls in the Tombs for another night but also for the people this system has its hooks in deeper.

During the experience, many of my cellmates had been able to sleep for a few hours on the cement floor, but I never managed to doze off for more than five minutes. Now, as I lay down in my own room, I was kept awake, by recollections as well as a new emotion: a euphoria, as if I were buoyed up on a swell.

So often while organizing, apathy or indifference appears the real enemy. Many times I've had to swallow a sense of embarrassed futility while making a minor ruckus in a day that seems hardly disturbed. But we stand in a moment of possibility and openness, even if it has shut some since last



trial. Tom hung up on his mom when she told him to be more conscientious.

"Have more conscience?" Tom said exasperatedly, "I wish I didn't think so much!" Tom broke down in tears, and Taylor reached out to him as a parent. He told Tom his parents love him, and talked about how slow parents are to come around to respect the things their children do.

Jack and I had more constructive conversations in the Tombs than we could back at the precinct. He described his four previous arrests over fifteen years, including his first arrest at the Matthew Shepherd protest in the late-1990s which drew attention to anti-gay violence. Jack also made a point to ask about how I was feeling. Following a

what happened to you, put it in a blog." This article is my small effort to honor my new friend's advice.

One of the most difficult things of the time was not knowing its duration, lacking signposts to measure progress, and indeed having few markers of time at all. Everyone played a guessing game of how long the process would take. Several times anger washed over me at the time the police were stealing. I imagined my daughter upset in the morning when I wasn't there, and being more so if I didn't make it home for dinner or bedtime.

But at 4:00pm my name was called right after Jack's and I felt like Bob Barker had just invited me onto the Price is Right. I walked in a chain gang with four other prisoners up several

Pretty soon I met with a National Lawyer's Guild Attorney, who heard my side of the arrest and explained that I would be offered an ACD (Adjournment Contemplating Dismissal), which meant the charges would be dropped if I wasn't arrested again within the next six months. Although I felt confident that the allegation that I was blocking traffic would not stand up in court, I was tired and wanted to avoid the hassle of a court date, so told him I would take the ACD. As I was called to the courtroom and said goodbye, one of the kids

"You're engaging in violence." When I responded that I didn't see how I committed any violence, the officer clarified: "You didn't listen. You didn't follow directions."



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But at 4:00pm my name was called right after Jack's and I felt like Bob Barker had just invited me onto the Price is Right. I walked in a chain gang with four other prisoners up several flights of stairs. The guards told me repeatedly to move faster, but I couldn't because my knee was hurting badly at this point.

Upstairs, there were twenty people in a waiting area, some of whom had been there since morning. I talked to an older man, probably in his fifties, who soon became embroiled in a debate with three others. A disagreement swirled around whether he should have run when caught with a joint in Central Park. "That's youth talking," he

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up for dealing called out, "This dude is our protester. Don't fuck with him!" It hardly seemed necessary, but I appreciated it.

Entering the courtroom was to pass into a world of civility and decorum, with mahogany pews, men and women in suits, and lots of natural light. The waiting bench for prisoners was made from the same wood, signaling, I suppose, our equal participation in the affair. But on the inside of the elegant barrier that

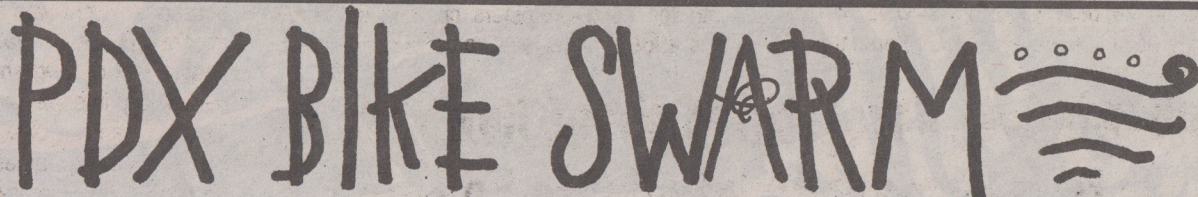
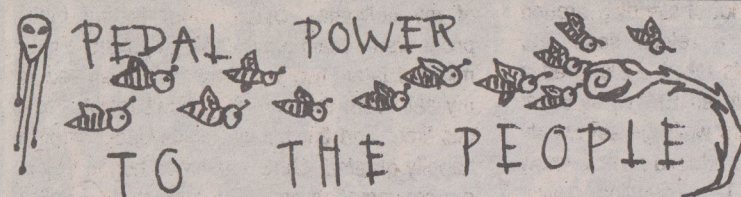
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fall, and that moment is attested by the fact that a few hundred kids beating on pots and pans can seem to those in power a serious and dire threat.

Special thanks to n+1 who published an earlier version of this piece at: <http://nplusonemag.com/crossing-sixth-avenue>. The names of all protestors and prisoners in this article were changed, excepting Jack, who is publicly identified with the movement.



By Crystal

PDX Bike Swarm is a group of Portland, OR (PDX) cyclists using the bicycle as a means to empower anarchists, activists and underserved citizens, and to challenge the idea and use of public spaces. The group began around last year's Occupy Portland, when it created a buffer zone between protesters and the police.

and hunger, and rode in opposition to the Columbia River Crossing, a proposed 10-12 lane, nine-mile long freeway that will cost 4-10 billion dollars to build. Despite the city's flourishing bicycle community, Portland cyclists are still overrun by automobiles and auto-centric transportation systems.

Every city deals with these issues. The push

invasion of Iraq. The cavalry worked at the protest as bike messengers, riding around to find where police were staging and then riding around informing protesters of their whereabouts.

PDX Bike Swarm has only two rules: bring a bike and be awesome.

Bring a Bike - This one's a no brainer. You

swarm. PDX Bike Swarm has ridden in groups ranging from three cyclists to 100. Several cyclists are needed to form a swarm, especially during a ride where additional cyclists may be called in — from home or wherever else — to assist with a bike swarm event when a situation gets hostile, like during Occupy Portland.

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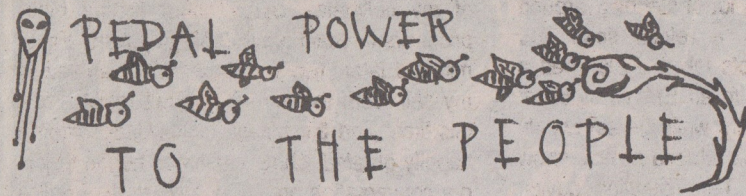
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PDX BIKE SWARM

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PDX Bike Swarm is a group of Portland, OR (PDX) cyclists using the bicycle as a means to empower anarchists, activists and underserved citizens, and to challenge the idea and use of public spaces. The group began around last year's Occupy Portland, when it created a buffer zone between protesters and the police just as eviction notices were about to be served. The swarm created a moving buffer between police and the encampment area, which kept the protest more peaceful than hostile, even though the police did clear out the area eventually. PDX Bike Swarm is kind of like Critical Mass in that it is a peaceful protest promoting bicycle use and safety with one simple message to drivers: share the road. But the two vary greatly in mission and riding technique.

A bike swarm congregates in areas where social and political injustices can be found. PDX Bike Swarm has no fixed leaders. People who call a particular swarm direct the swarm along a predetermined area of attack and will call in for help as needed. The beauty of the swarm is that it uses the bicycle — a slow-moving, emission-free, legal mode of transportation — to protest and protect the public and the use of public spaces, by defying ill-conceived notions of how the public is expected to behave in a public space.

Besides Occupy Portland, PDX Bike Swarm has protested police violence, homelessness

and hunger, and rode in opposition to the Columbia River Crossing, a proposed 10-12 lane, nine-mile long freeway that will cost 4-10 billion dollars to build. Despite the city's flourishing bicycle community, Portland cyclists are still overrun by automobiles and auto-centric transportation systems.

Every city deals with these issues. The push for more highways and faster commutes for

invasion of Iraq. The cavalry worked at the protest as bike messengers, riding around to find where police were staging and then riding around — informing protesters of their whereabouts.

PDX Bike Swarm has only two rules: bring a bike and be awesome.

Bring a Bike - This one's a no brainer. You need a bike to swarm. Also, bicycle safety is



drivers supersedes the need for livable urban communities and safe roads for everyone to use.

Other swarm groups have formed in Salt Lake City and London since the inception of PDX Bike Swarm, as well as groups with similar missions, including Bike Bloc in Seattle and Occupy Wall Street Bike Coalition. PDX Bike Swarm modeled their own strategy after the work of San Francisco Bike Calvary, which started in 2003 with a protest against the

key in all rides. Make sure your bike works properly, wear a helmet and use bike lights at night.

Be awesome - The sky's the limit on how to be awesome during a bike swarm event. Some cyclists ride wearing crazy outfits with musical instruments in their bicycle baskets or signs. Or whatever else. Be creative. Being awesome also means being ready to join the swarm when needed. Active involvement by group members is necessary for a successful

swarm. PDX Bike Swarm has ridden in groups ranging from three cyclists to 100. Several cyclists are needed to form a swarm, especially during a ride where additional cyclists may be called in — from home or wherever else — to assist with a bike swarm event when a situation gets hostile, like during Occupy Portland.

Strategy Meetings - In Portland, strategy meetings occur before bike swarm events to discuss the group's plan of action. Meetings usually occur on a weekly basis, in informal meeting areas like bars or whatever else is suggested. Those interested in getting involved can sign up to join the swarm's Google group. Meetings and other bicycle-related news and events are constantly posted in the group.

How to start a swarm - Anyone can start a bike swarm, anywhere in the world. All you need is a bicycle and a strategy and some members. To start a successful swarm, connecting your bike swarm online is a good idea. Forming a Facebook or Google group is a simple way to meet new members and organize events and meetings online. You could also make fliers for swarm rides and meetings and post them in area around your city frequented by cyclists to attract new bike swarm members. Creating a design or symbol is helpful when promoting your bike swarm online or in your community, and it could also be used to make stickers, buttons and t-shirts.

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October 18 - 22

Radical Mycology Convergence -
Port Townsend, WA
radicalmycologyconvergence.com

October 19 - 21

Mountain Justice Fall Summit Rock
Creek, WV www.mountainjustice.org

October 20 • 12 - 6

Southeast Zine Fest - St. Charleston, SC
southeastzinefest.com

October 21 • 7:30 pm

Long Haul Oral History project on The
Mission: Yippie Eradication Project -
3124 Shattuck, Berkeley thelonghaul.org

October 26 • 6 pm

San Francisco Critical Mass Halloween
bike ride - dress up/gather @ Justin
Herman Plaza

November 9 • 11

Boston Anarchist Bookfair - Simmons
College bostonanarchistbookfair.org

November 9 - 11 • 8 pm

East Bay Bike Party - start location TBA
eastbaybikeparty.wordpress.com

November 10

Carboro, NC Anarchist Bookfair -
carboronanarchistbookfair.wordpress.com

November 16 - 18

Protest School of the Americas - Ft.
Benning, GA soaaw.org

November 21 • 7:30 pm

Long Haul Oral History project on The
1999 protests that Shutdown the WTO -
3124 Shattuck, Berkeley thelonghaul.org

November 23

Buy Nothing Day in N. America (Nov. 24
in UK)

December 1 • 11 - 6 pm

East Bay Anarchist Bookfair -
Conversations & Books - Oakland, CA
eastbayanarchist.com

December 8 • 10 - 5

East Bay Alternative Book & Zine Fest -
eastbayalternativetobookandzinefest.com

December 8

Humboldt Anarchist Bookfair - near
Eureka, CA humboldtgrassroots.com/hg

January 19 • 3 pm

Slingshot article deadline for issue #112

January 20

Application deadline for the Montreal
International Anarchist Theatre Festival
(May 21-22) anarchisttheatrefestival.com

March 16 - 17

Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair - San
Francisco new location 14th & Mission
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